

“NATION BUILDING AFTER 9/11: NATION BUILDING AS AN
ANTI-TERRORISM TOOL UNDER THE MILITARY’S LEADERSHIP AND
BUILDING THE AFGHAN STATE”

by
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Abstract

In the post 9/11 environment nation building is often viewed as an anti-terrorism tool. This thesis examines post 9/11 nation building with a focus on 1) whether nation building secures a lasting victory against anti-American terrorism, 2) how skilled is the U.S. military to lead nation building missions, and 3) which government model, centralized or decentralized, is most likely to result in a sustainable Afghan state. In doing so, it first evaluates the notion that promoting democracy through nation building in failed states will secure a lasting victory against anti-American terrorism. The focus then shifts to the military's skills in the areas of democratization and economic development by discussing the military's contributions to the success achieved, or the lack of success, in the missions in Germany and Japan at the end of the Second World War, and more recently in Iraq. Finally, to examine which government model is most likely to result in a sustainable Afghan state, the thesis discusses the inability of the central government to extend its reach to the periphery and guarantee security in the context of the complex history of Afghanistan. The thesis concludes that failed states will continue to present a security danger in the next several decades. Thus, nation building will remain a relevant tool in reducing opportunities for terrorist organizations. Only an appropriate mix of military and civilian agencies, rather than the military taking the lead in all aspects of nation building, can result in a lasting success, namely a sustainable democratic state. The thesis makes it clear that the proper model for a sustainable Afghan state is a flexible centralized model that allows division of responsibilities between the center and the periphery.

Thesis defense panel: Dr. Mark Stout and Dr. Sarah O'Byrne

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Introduction

The United States has amassed extensive experience in nation building prior to 9/11. Following the end of the Cold War, the United States has intervened approximately once every two years compared to about once every decade during the Cold War. While the U.S. interventions during the Cold War were designed to complement the policy of containment through regime changes, post-Cold War missions focused on building democratic governments. At the same time, the duration of these missions has increased to up to ten years. The U.S.-led operations have also become more ambitious in scope. While the goal used to be separation of warring factions, policing demilitarized zones, and monitoring ceasefires, the goals of today's missions include reuniting divided societies, disarming adversaries, demobilizing former combatants, organizing elections, installing representative governments, and promoting democratic reform and economic growth.¹

After the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001, nation building acquired a new dimension. It evolved from being a tool used in achieving humanitarian and development objectives to becoming a principal tool in combating terrorism. Nation building missions in Afghanistan and Iraq conducted after 9/11 are the most ambitious post-Cold War engagements. The United States undertook occupation of two countries simultaneously with the goal of transforming them into functioning democracies and, consequently, eradicating terrorism.

¹ Dobbins James, John G. McGinn, Keith Crane, Seth G. Jones, Rollie Lal, Andrew Rathmell, Rachel M. Swanger and Anga R. Timilsina. *America's Role in Nation-Building: From Germany to Iraq*. Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2003. <http://www.rand.org/pubs/monograph_reports/MR1753>

Despite its long track record in nation building, the United States has viewed every mission of the past, including post 9/11 missions in Afghanistan and Iraq, as an anomaly not likely to be repeated in the future. As a result, there has been no significant effort to consolidate knowledge and build an effective nation building apparatus. As the United States is set to withdraw most of its troops from Afghanistan at the end of 2014, the future of nation building in the wider U.S. strategy remains unclear.

Nation building has always been a highly polarizing and contentious topic both among policy makers and the American public. Considering that nation building missions are prolonged endeavors that come with casualties and high costs, no policy maker wants to be seen as putting the U.S. military at risk and wasting the taxpayers' money.

Additionally, nation building missions come with no guarantees for success as the host countries have a natural tendency to resist solutions imposed by outsiders, even when interventions are supported by reputable international organizations, such as the United Nations. Those who oppose nation building often claim that achieving success is close to impossible; they characterize nation building as a "fool's errand."²

Nation building is a complex and multidimensional research topic. This thesis portfolio examines one specific aspect of each of the following three broad areas in the context of post 9/11 nation building missions: 1) the relevance of nation building for the United States' national security, 2) the role of the military, and 3) the viability of achieving the

² Dempsey, Gary. "Fool's Errands: America's Recent Encounters with Nation Building." *Mediterranean Quarterly*, Volume 12, Number 1, Winter 2001, pp. 57-80

ultimate goal of nation building, namely a stable and self-sustainable democratic state. In the first area, the research focuses on whether nation building presents a long-term solution to the anti-American terrorism. In the second area, this thesis examines the role of the military by looking at the military's leadership in the reconstruction phase of the past and present nation building missions. Afghanistan is the longest and arguably the most consequential nation building mission since the end of the Cold War. Hence, in an effort to challenge the hypothesis that nation building is a "fool's errand," the thesis discusses the appropriate state model for the new Afghan state.

The first chapter explores whether nation building presents a long-term solution to the anti-American terrorism post 9/11. It examines the history of the United States' anti-terrorism policy in order to explain post 9/11 nation building. The debate whether failed states serve as terrorist safe havens is central when discussing the relevance of nation building as an anti-terrorism tool. Therefore, this chapter contrasts the views of proponents and critics of the idea that the way to combat terrorism is to promote democracy through nation building in failed states by reviewing official documents and statements, scholarly analysis, and news reports. The chapter discusses the Afghanistan experience to examine the rationale for using nation building as an anti-terrorism tool as well as the prospective for securing a long-term victory. The discussion then turns to the problem of sustainability of an anti-terrorism strategy that is centered on nation building when faced with declining public support and mounting costs. The main finding in this chapter is that, even though terrorism is not a concern in majority of failed states, failed states present important opportunities for terrorist networks. Evidence suggests that

democracies are less likely to produce terrorists than any other regime type. Therefore, building democracies in failed states has a potential of providing a permanent solution to terrorism. This chapter recommends consolidating knowledge and fixing the nation building system so it can effectively address the security danger presented by failed states.

The second chapter examines whether the U.S. military has the skills to take the lead in post 9/11 nation building. Specifically, the focus in this chapter is on military leadership in the areas traditionally managed by civilian agencies, such as democratization and economic development. The chapter starts with an attempt to highlight the policy decisions that resulted in the military taking the lead in the post 9/11 nation building missions. The chapter examines how the success achieved, or the lack of success, in democratization and economic development in Germany and Japan after the end of the Second World War and in Iraq post 9/11 illustrates the military's nation building skills. The focus then shifts to recent changes in the military's doctrine and examines the soldiers' attitudes toward nation building in an attempt to identify whether the military is ready to embrace nation building as one of its core duties. Finally, the chapter discusses the implications of using the military as the main tool in nation building for the wider U.S. foreign policy goals and combat readiness. The main finding is that the military is skilled enough to lead missions limited to "state building" but not missions that also include the "nation building" element. Post-Cold War and post 9/11 missions indicate that the military is neither resourced nor trained to lead the efforts in the areas of governance, rule of law, and economy, while at the same time performing its primary job,

which is providing security. The chapter upholds that only an appropriate mix of military and civilian agencies, rather than the military taking the lead in all aspects of nation building, can result in a success, namely a sustainable democratic state.

The third chapter examines which government model, centralized or decentralized, is most likely to result in a sustainable Afghan state. The chapter focuses on two areas that are arguably most consequential for the sustainability of the new Afghan state. The first area is the inability of the central government to extend its reach and establish authority among tribes living in rural areas. Therefore, this chapter examines tribalism in Afghanistan in order to identify solutions to the historically dysfunctional relationship between the central government and the periphery. The chapter presents challenges that Great Britain and the Soviet Union faced in bringing the Pashtun tribes under central rule in an effort to identify lessons that can be applied to today's interactions with the tribes. The second area examined is the fragile security situation. Arbakai networks offer a solid case study when examining whether local structures can assist in maintaining security. The discussion then turns to current developments in the area of governance and whether the current highly centralized model is functioning in Afghanistan. The main finding is that a plausible solution for Afghanistan is a flexible centralized government model that allows division of responsibilities between the center and the periphery. This chapter concludes that a functional local government system that is built ground-up and engaged with Kabul is the key for survival of the Afghan state.

Chapter 1

Nation Building as an Anti-terrorism Tool

Nation-building missions in Afghanistan and Iraq are the most ambitious post-Cold War U.S.-led operations. In December 2011, as the final U.S. troops withdrew from Iraq, President Obama declared Iraq a success. The President said, "Iraq is not a perfect place. It has many challenges ahead. But we are leaving behind a sovereign, stable and self-reliant Iraq with a representative government that was elected by its people."³ Many disagree with President Obama's statement that Iraq is a success and it remains to be seen if Iraq will continue to develop as a democracy or disintegrate and serve as a launching pad for terrorist attacks. While the terms and ratification of the Bilateral Security Agreement (BSA) between the United States and Afghanistan, which will govern the U.S. presence in Afghanistan in the next decade, are still being negotiated, it is evident that the United States will withdraw the majority of its forces from Afghanistan by the end of 2014. It is unclear whether the young Afghan government will be able to counter the resurgence of Taliban and al Qaeda once the U.S. troops leave the country.

This chapter examines whether nation building presents a long-term solution to the anti-American terrorism post 9/11. The notion that nation building is the only solution for ensuring a lasting victory against terrorists has been a principal premise in the United States' anti-terrorism policy since September 11. After September 11, nation building has become, as described by some scholars, "securitized" – nation building has evolved from

³ McGreal, Chris. "Barack Obama Declares Iraq War a Success." The Guardian. 14 December 2011
<<http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2011/dec/14/barack-obama-iraq-war-success>>

being a tool in achieving humanitarian and development objectives to becoming a principal tool in combating terrorism.⁴

This chapter starts with an attempt to define nation building as it relates to post-conflict interventions and a brief examination of the history of the United States' anti-terrorism policy in order to explain the securitization of nation building post 9/11. The debate whether failed states serve as terrorist safe havens and whether democratization leads to reduction in terrorism is central when discussing the relevance of nation building as an anti-terrorism tool. Thus, this chapter contrasts the views of the proponents and critics of the idea that the way to combat terrorism is to promote democracy through nation building in failed states. The discussion then turns to the problem of sustainability of an anti-terrorism strategy that is centered on nation building by examining public support and costs. The nation building experience in Afghanistan post 9/11 offers a solid case study as it exemplifies whether lasting results can be achieved through nation building as well as challenges in securing a long-term victory. Finally, this chapter offers recommendations on the extent to which nation building should be included in the U.S. anti-terrorism strategy.

Nation Building Defined

In the United States' political discourse the term "nation building" is very often used interchangeably with the term "state building." Furthermore, President Obama, in order

⁴ Menkhaus, Ken. "Quasi-States, Nation-Building, and Terrorist Safe Havens." *Journal of Conflict Studies*, [S.l.], v. 23, n. 2, Feb. 2006. ISSN 1715-5673.
<<http://journals.hil.unb.ca/index.php/JCS/article/view/216/444>>

to underline the need to refocus resources on domestic issues, called for “nation building at home” in his 2012 state of the union speech.⁵ It appears that “nation building” has become a political buzzword applicable to any and all reconstruction efforts at home and abroad.

It is important to note that, although the term nation building is used extensively in the news media and policy discussions, a clear and universally accepted definition of nation building in the context of foreign interventions has not emerged. Administrations leading various overseas operations each had a preferred terminology. For instance, the post-Cold War operations in Somalia, Haiti, and Bosnia were generally termed peacebuilding missions while the Bush administration preferred the term stabilization and reconstruction to refer to its post-conflict operations in Afghanistan and Iraq. However, all these missions had the same goal - building a stable society through democratization with the help of military force. Some analysts use the term “nation building” to describe all reconstruction efforts after the end of the Second World War. While there appears to be a basic understanding, at least in the political discourse in the United States, that the difference between the terms such as peacebuilding, nation building, and state building is mostly terminological, some argue that the difference is fundamental.⁶

The term “peacebuilding” is the term preferred by the United Nations and has been used to describe international interventions in the Balkans in the 1990s. In 2007, the UN

⁵ The White House. 2012 State of the Union. January 25, 2012 <http://www.whitehouse.gov/photos-and-video/video/2012/01/25/2012-state-union-address-enhanced-version#transcript>

⁶ Dobbins, James., McGinn, John G., Crane, Keith., Jones, Seth G., Lal, Rollie., Rathmell, Andrew., Swanger, Rachel M., and Timilsina, Anga R. “America's Role in Nation-Building: From Germany to Iraq.” Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2003. <http://www.rand.org/pubs/monograph_reports/MR1753>

Secretary-General's Policy Committee defined peacebuilding as a set of measures “targeted to reduce the risk of lapsing or relapsing into conflict by strengthening national capacities at all levels for conflict management, and to lay the foundations for sustainable peace and development.”⁷

The terms “state building” and “nation building” are representative of the terminology used in the United States’ academic and political discourse to describe post 9/11 missions in Afghanistan and Iraq. Therefore, when attempting to define nation building it is important to examine whether state building is synonymous to nation building. Report entitled *The Beginner’s Guide to Nation-Building*, defines nation building as “the use of armed force as part of a broader effort to promote political and economic reforms with the objective of transforming a society emerging from conflict into one at peace with itself and its neighbors.”⁸ Authors of an article published in *Max Planck Yearbook of United Nations Law* take issue with this definition as it focuses on state, rather than nation.⁹

Political scientists draw a clear distinction between state failure and nation failure and maintain that the two phenomena are not always mutually inclusive. State failure can be defined as “the failure of public institutions to deliver positive political goods to citizens

⁷ United Nations Peacebuilding Support Office. United Nations.
<<http://www.un.org/en/peacebuilding/pbso/pbun.shtml>>

⁸ Dobbins, James., Jones, Seth G., Crane, Keith., and Cole DeGrasse, Beth. “The Beginner’s Guide to Nation-Building.” Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2007.
<<http://www.rand.org/pubs/monographs/MG557.>>

⁹ Von Bogdandy, Armin., Häußler, Stefan., Hanschmann, Felix., and Utz, Raphael. “State-Building, Nation-Building, and Constitutional Politics in Post-Conflict Situations: Conceptual Clarifications and an Appraisal of Different Approaches.” *Max Planck Yearbook of United Nations Law*, Volume 9, 2005, p. 579-613.

on a scale likely to undermine the legitimacy and the existence of the state itself.”¹⁰ On the other hand, the most important indicator of nation failure is people’s rejection of government as a legitimate source of power. In a democratic society, government legitimacy stems from the notion that government represents the people and that government and the people are united in the same purpose. Nation failure ensues when people consider the existing government illegitimate and when “nationhood no longer provides the foundation of accepted public power.”¹¹ Very often state failure in multiethnic states is accompanied by nation failure exemplified in rejection of common history, traditions, and customs. As history shows, collapse of state and national identity crisis can easily lead into civil war. The war in the Balkans in the 1990s is an illustrative example. The collapse of often disputed Yugoslavian identity of over forty years was followed by re-emergence of national identity, Croatian and Serbian for instance. It gave way to the rise of militant elites who instilled fear and the need for self-defense and fight for survival in their respective communities. These are usually pre-conditions for violence and civil war.¹²

State building can be broadly defined as “establishment, re-establishment, and strengthening of a public structure in a given territory capable of delivering public goods.”¹³ Nation building aims to construct a national identity based on common traditions, institutions, and history for the purpose of legitimizing state structure. Hence,

¹⁰ Ibid

¹¹ Ibid

¹² Ibid

¹³ Ibid

nation building can be defined as a “process of collective identity formation with a view to legitimizing public power within a given territory.”¹⁴

It is evident that there are fundamental differences between the terms “state building” and “nation building.” They describe two very different, although often overlapping, phenomena and it is not always appropriate to use the terms interchangeably. However, for the purpose of this research, considering that the missions examined are cases of state failure aggravated by nation failure and “nation building” is the term used in academic articles discussed, broadening the definition of nation building to include elements of state building, namely political and economic reforms, is appropriate.

Stopping Terrorism: From Containment to Nation Building

The United States’ anti-terrorism policy from the 1970s to the 1990s is typically viewed as a policy of containment as it mainly focused on deterring and punishing state sponsors of terrorist networks.¹⁵ The main rationale for the containment policy is best illustrated in the words of the former Secretary of State Henry Kissinger who wrote that, “Governments on whose territory terrorists are tolerated will find it especially difficult to cooperate [with the United States] unless the consequences of failing to do so are made more risky than their tacit bargain with the terrorists.”¹⁶

¹⁴ Ibid

¹⁵ Perl, Raphael. “Terrorism and National Security: Issues and Trends.” Congressional Research Service. December 21, 2004. < <http://www.fas.org/irp/crs/IB10119.pdf>>

¹⁶ Dempsey, Gary T. “Old Folly in a New Disguise: Nation Building to Combat Terrorism.” Cato Institute Policy Analysis. March 21, 2002. No. 429 < <http://www.cato.org/sites/cato.org/files/pubs/pdf/pa429.pdf>>

Following the September 11 attacks, the policy of containment was quickly replaced by the policy of preemption, which is generally referred to as the “Bush Doctrine.” The Bush Administration decided that the United States should take a proactive role in stopping anti-American terrorism rather than act only after attacks occur. The main effect of September 11 was evident immediately following the attacks; combating Islamic terrorism, with the focus on dismantling al Qaeda, became the top national priority. In order to achieve that goal, the Bush administration approved a preemptive use of force against not only terrorist groups and infrastructure but also state sponsors of terrorist networks.¹⁷ As a result, the nation building missions in Afghanistan and Iraq, a natural progression after toppling the Taliban and Saddam Hussein, were viewed as the means for preventing terrorism.

One illustrative example of how central nation building has become in protecting America's national security interests is the remarkable attitude change on the issue by President G.W. Bush. Candidate G.W. Bush opposed nation building and stated that the United States' military should not be used “for what is called nation building.”¹⁸

However, following the attacks on September 11, President Bush asserted that the success in Iraq was paramount and that, "Rebuilding Iraq will require a sustained commitment from many nations, including our own. We will remain in Iraq as long as necessary, and not a day more."¹⁹ Published in the aftermath of the attacks on September 11, President Bush's National Security Strategy is heavily focused on failed and weak states as well as spreading democracy across the globe. The document states that the United States will

¹⁷ Perl, 2004.

¹⁸ Fukuyama, Francis. “Nation-building 101.” *The Atlantic Monthly*. January/February 2004, Volume 293, No 1, 159-162

¹⁹ Ibid

“actively work to bring the hope of democracy, development, free markets, and free trade to every corner of the world.”²⁰ It further asserts that, “In an increasingly interconnected world, regional crisis can strain our alliances, rekindle rivalries among the major powers, and create horrifying affronts to human dignity.”²¹ In his national security strategy, President Bush made a pledge that he would remain committed to resolving the issue of weak states.

Even though President Obama campaigned on ending the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, his National Security Strategy published in 2010 identified failed states as one of the main dangers for the American national security in the decades to follow. President Obama's National Security states that, “Failing states breed conflict and endanger regional and global security.”²² The document further asserts that, “The United States and the international community cannot shy away from the difficult task of pursuing stabilization in conflict and post-conflict environments.”²³ Obama's strategy includes anticipating and preventing security challenges. Obama states that the goal is to “diminish military risk, act before crises and conflicts erupt, and ensure that governments are better able to serve their people.”²⁴

The United Nations (UN) shares the belief that nation building plays a vital role in ensuring global stability and has made changes to its Charter to legitimize future missions. A UN report published in 2000, which outlines the UN reforms and is often

²⁰ The National Security Strategy of the United States. September 2002.

²¹ Ibid

²² The National Security Strategy of the United States. May 2010.

²³ Ibid

²⁴ Ibid

referred to as the Brahimi Report, dedicates significant space to developing strategies to promote effective governance in post-conflict states. The United Nations held a long-standing view that all foreign military interventions including nation building must be in accordance with international law, which holds in high regard the principle of state sovereignty and the norm of nonintervention. According to the article 2[4] of the UN Charter, no state can interfere in the domestic affairs of another state except in self-defense or unless mandated by the United Nations. However, in 2005 the United Nations adopted the Responsibility to Protect (R2P) doctrine, which states that, if a sovereign state is unable or unwilling to protect its citizens, the international community has a responsibility to intervene when sanctioned by the Security Council.²⁵

Additionally, key U.S. allies and partners in the fight against terrorism agree that nation building will remain relevant and have taken steps to address the danger of terrorism emanating from failed states in their national security strategy. Australia appears to have taken steps to incorporate nation building into its defense policy traditionally based on conflict prevention. In December 2008, when presenting the first National Security Statement, a document equivalent to U.S. National Security Strategy, to the Parliament, Prime Minister Kevin Rudd emphasized the importance of regional engagement in ensuring Australia's security. The expectation is that the next National Security Statement will include Australia's nation building strategies for weak states with focus on Southeast Asia and the Southwest Pacific.²⁶ The National Security Strategy document of Great Britain published in 2010 states that international terrorism will continue to present

²⁵ Smith, Michael G. and Shrimpton, Rebecca. "Nation-building Interventions and National Security; An Australian Perspective." PRISM 2, no. 2 Features, National Defense University, 17 March 2011.

²⁶ Ibid

a challenge and that “fragile, failing and failed states around the world provide the environment for terrorists to operate as they look to exploit ungoverned or ill-governed space.”²⁷

However, there is still significant resistance towards making nation building a permanent part of the U.S. national security strategy. Some analysts believe that continued focus on nation building will endanger wider U.S. foreign policy goals. For instance, Justin Logan and Christopher Preble believe that most nation building missions are not aligned with U.S. national security interests. Nation building missions have vague mandates and can tie up American military and financial resources for indefinite periods. Logan and Preble state that incorporating nation building into national security strategy “is a recipe for squandering American power, American money, and potentially American lives.”²⁸

Exploring the Link Between Failed States, Terrorism, and Democratization

The securitization of nation building has resulted in an increased focus on failed states. It is evident that the relevance of nation building as an anti-terrorism tool hinges on whether weak and failed states serve as terrorist safe havens. Many analysts and policy makers operate under a broad definition of failed states and argue that failed states will remain a threat in the foreseeable future and that promoting democracy, strengthening the rule of law, and building state institutions is the best approach to ensure global stability.

²⁷ A Strong Britain in an Age of Uncertainty: The National Security Strategy. October 2010. <http://www.direct.gov.uk/prod_consum_dg/groups/dg_digitalassets/@dg/@en/documents/digitalasset/dg_191639.pdf>

²⁸ Logan, Justin., Preble, Christopher. “Failed States and Flawed Logic, The Case against a Standing Nation-Building Office.” Policy Analysis No 560, January 11, 2006.

Opponents of this view argue that instances where failed states present a threat to the U.S. national security are rare and that focusing resources on repairing every failed state is a mistake. They also argue that democratization, as the main goal of U.S.-led nation building missions, does not necessarily lead to reduction in terrorism.

a) Is Terrorism a Problem in Failed States?

Francis Fukuyama argues that the main threat for the security of the United States and the wider international community in the century ahead is weak, collapsed or failed states. Weak or non-existent government institutions create opportunities for the rise of terrorism. Fukuyama states that learning from past experiences and building political support for nation building will be the “defining issue for America in the century ahead.”²⁹ Directly linked to the problem of weak and failing states is the danger represented by ungoverned spaces, areas located within the borders of a state but beyond the state’s authority and control. According to the *Strategic Global Assessment* published by the Institute for National Strategic Studies, there is a direct link between ungoverned spaces and terrorist attacks on a global scale. In today’s globalized world, terrorist groups can take full advantage of modern technology and use ungoverned spaces to organize, plan, and launch operations of unprecedented reach and proportions. For instance, ungoverned areas along the Pakistan-Afghanistan border have long served as terrorist safe havens. In 2006, terrorists operating in this area planned an attack that would have destroyed seven transatlantic airplanes. British police managed to disrupt the attack

²⁹ Fukuyama, 2004.

before it was carried out. This same area has been the launching pad for terrorist attacks against the U.S. and coalition forces in Afghanistan and suicide bombings in Pakistan.³⁰

The view that failing states present an imminent security danger is widespread and has led to a number of projects in recent years focused on identifying the likelihood of state failures. For instance, the Fund for Peace produces an annual Failed States Index (FSI) that ranks the likelihood of a state failure based on social, economic, political, and military indicators. The Index is based on The Fund for Peace's proprietary Conflict Assessment Software Tool (CAST) analytical platform. The index is predicated on the belief that weak and failing states pose a challenge to the international community and that one state's failure can negatively affect its neighbors as well as other states in remote regions. That has been the case with states like Somalia, Libya, Yemen, Haiti, and Bosnia. The 2012 Failed States Index sounds the alarm for Somalia and Yemen, countries that have been linked to the United States national security as they are often considered to be terrorists' safe havens.³¹

Some analysts question the link between failed states and terrorism and argue that terrorism is not a concern in the majority of failed states. The List of Foreign Terrorist Organizations (FTO) published by the U.S. Secretary of State is regarded as one of the most reliable lists of terrorist organizations that pose a security risk. When compared to FTO, twenty states listed on the 2006 Failed State Index as most likely to fail appear to pose no significant security threat. Aidan Hehir argues that states listed on the Failed

³⁰ Cronin, Patrick M. "Global Strategic Assessment 2009: America's Security Role in a Changing World." Institute for National Strategic Studies. 2009.

³¹ The Fund for Peace. "Failed States Index." 2012< <http://ffp.statesindex.org/rankings-2012-sortable>>

State Index as most likely to fail would have to host a significant number of FTOs if indeed failing states are terrorist breeding grounds. However, only Iraq, Afghanistan, and Pakistan exhibit a marked presence of FTOs while the remaining thirteen listed on the Failed State Index as most likely to fail have no presence of FTOs. States that ranked low on the Failed State Index, for instance India, Lebanon, Israel, and the Philippines, are in fact the states with the highest presence of FTOs. Therefore, Hehir concludes that there is no correlation between a state's failure and the number of FTOs operating within its territory.³²

Dempsey argues that failed states do not necessarily present safe havens for terrorists as "failed states are where the terrorists are most vulnerable to covert action, commando raids, surprise attacks, and local informants willing to work for a few dollars."³³ Instead of pouring resources into nation building, he suggests a "realist perspective" which focuses on credible deterrence. Dempsey states that the most effective way to prevent terrorism is to discourage countries sponsors of terrorism by imposing a significant cost for supporting terrorist networks. Dempsey is not concerned about ungoverned areas either as he sees the lack of competent government as an advantage for the United States. Ungoverned areas are where the terrorists are most vulnerable because there is no legitimate power to protect them.³⁴

Ken Menkhaus agrees that terrorists consider failed states to be a relatively inhospitable territory. In the aftermath of 9/11, Somalia has been often discussed as a possible next

³² Hehir, Aidan. "The Myth of the Failed State and the War on Terror: A Challenge to the Conventional Wisdom." *Journal of Intervention and State building*. 2007.1:3, 307-332

³³ Dempsey, 2002.

³⁴ Ibid

nation building mission. At first glance, Somalia seems like a logical next target. Somalia is clearly a failed state as the current government is completely ineffective. It is also a country with an active terrorist presence in the form of the radical Islamist group al-Ittihad al-Islamiyya (AIAI). However, even though Somalia has been described as a potential terrorist base for al Qaeda, there appears to be little evidence that there are credible terrorist targets in the country. The fact that al Qaeda has not established the kind of presence that would warrant a large scale military occupation might suggest that failed states are not necessarily viewed by terrorists as potential safe havens.³⁵ However, Menkhaus does note that failed states are not terrorist free as the evidence suggests that terrorist networks find failed states to be useful for easy movement of men, money, and material into the neighboring countries as is currently evident in the Horn of Africa.³⁶

Menkhaus warns about the consequences of false linkage between failed states and terrorism and argues that current nation building practices do not eliminate terrorist threat and can have a counter effect. He also warns about a “security paradox” of nation building. During the transitional stage of nation building, the lengthy time period between state collapse and a fully effective new government, the state is sovereign but weak and corrupt, the condition he describes as a quasi state. Terrorist networks will use quasi states for their bases as corruption among police border guards and airport officials allows them to circumvent the law while at the same time enjoying protection from an international intervention. For instance, it is widely suspected that the suspect in the December 2002 terrorist attack in Mombasa, Kenya escaped by bribing the police.³⁷

³⁵ Menkhaus, 2006.

³⁶ Ibid

³⁷ Ibid

Another important consideration when discussing nation building as an anti-terrorism tool is the U.S. military being used by local power holders to advance their agenda. History shows that competing factions will attempt to use the U.S. military as a power grabbing tool. This phenomenon has been noted in Afghanistan. In December 2001, the U.S. air force attacked a convoy on a road in Paktia province after the U.S. military was tipped off that Taliban officials were traveling in the convoy. More than fifty people died in the attack. The information revealed in the aftermath of the attack made it clear that the U.S. was used in a local power struggle. The investigation uncovered that the convoy was mostly made up of tribal elders and that some Taliban were indeed travelling in the convoy. However, those were former Taliban who had switched sides when it became clear that the U.S. was winning. All indications were that the U.S. informant wanted to eliminate somebody in the convoy and misled the U.S. military in order to accomplish his agenda. This phenomenon is likely to repeat in other missions as well. In Somalia, often discussed in the context of terrorist safe haven and failed states, three warlords were calling on the United States to intervene militarily and politically in 2002 in order to prevent further rise of terrorism. However, a closer inspection reveals that their main motivation was to topple a weak government and they were hoping that the U.S. would do that on their behalf if terrorism were included in the mix. Dempsey quotes a U.S. official familiar with Somalia as saying that, “The new game in town is to call your enemy a terrorist and hope that America will destroy him for you.”³⁸

³⁸ Dempsey, 2002.

b) Does Democratization Through Nation Building Prevent Terrorism?

The post-Cold War and post 9/11 nation building missions, for instance in Bosnia, Kosovo, Afghanistan, and Iraq, evidence that the main goal of the U.S-led nation building is democratization. The view that spreading democracy will advance the U.S. national security by preventing the rise of terrorism has been the main premise of the U.S. anti-terrorism strategy post 9/11. President Bush was clear that replacing dictatorships with democratic governments is essential in stopping terrorism. President Bush stated that, "When a dictatorship controls the political life of a country, responsible opposition cannot develop, and dissent is driven underground and toward the extreme. And to draw attention away from their social and economic failures, dictators place blame on other countries and other races, and stir the hatred that leads to violence. This status quo of despotism and anger cannot be ignored or appeased, kept in a box or bought off."³⁹

The 2006 *U.S. National Strategy for Combating Terrorism* illustrates the type of reasoning that leads to the conclusion that democratization is the only long-term solution to terrorism. The strategy states that, "The long-term solution for winning the War on Terror is the advancement of freedom and human dignity through effective democracy."⁴⁰ It further states that the "War on Terror" is both a "battle of arms and a battle of ideas."⁴¹ Hence, promoting democratic values is as important as defeating the terrorists on the battlefield. The cause of anti-American terrorism in the broader Middle East is not

³⁹ Gause, F. Gregory. "Can Democracy Stop Terrorism?" *Foreign Affairs*. 1 Sept. 2005. Web. 26 Apr. 2014. <<http://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/61021/f-gregory-gause-iii/can-democracy-stop-terrorism>>.

⁴⁰ The White House. *National Strategy for Combating Terrorism*. 2006

⁴¹ The White House. *National Strategy for Combating Terrorism*. 2006

poverty, the U.S. policies regarding the Israeli-Palestinian issue, or recent military actions aimed at preventing terrorist attacks. For instance, al Qaeda targeted the United States long before the United States invaded Afghanistan and Iraq. Instead, terrorism rises from political isolation and mounting grievances. The main view is that democracy, because it is based on empowerment and expansion of liberties for the entire population, “offers an ownership stake in society, a chance to shape one’s own future.”⁴² Democratization addresses the real cause of terrorism because it resolves grievances by instituting “the rule of law, the peaceful resolution of disputes, and the habits of advancing interests through compromise.”⁴³

The voices that question the view that democratization will prevent terrorism have been growing stronger in light of the slow progress in Iraq and Afghanistan and they are reflected in President Obama’s 2011 anti-terrorism strategy. Obama’s strategy is focused on practical steps in stopping al Qaeda and its affiliates and building international alliances rather than taking concrete steps to build democracies.⁴⁴ In President Obama’s strategy, the focus shifts from actively building democracies to merely supporting “the rights of free speech, assembly, and democracy.”⁴⁵

It is plausible to argue that there is no evidence to support the premise that democratization will stop terrorism. Gregory F. Gause questions the link between terrorism and the form of government.⁴⁶ He states that empirical data does not indicate that there is a link between the number of terrorist attacks and the form of government.

⁴² Ibid

⁴³ The White House. National Strategy for Combating Terrorism. 2006

⁴⁴ The White House. Nation Strategy for Counterterrorism. 2011

⁴⁵ Ibid

⁴⁶ Gause. 2005.

For instance, there is no evidence that democracies are less likely to experience terrorist attacks than autocracies. He points to the State Department's annual *Patterns of Global Terrorism* report that indicates that “between 2000 and 2003, 269 major terrorist incidents around the world occurred in countries classified as “free” by Freedom House, 119 occurred in “partly free” countries, and 138 occurred in “not free” countries.”⁴⁷ Additionally, proponents of this view emphasize that even developed democracies are not immune to terrorism. It is evident that al Qaeda operates from Germany, Great Britain, Canada, and other stable democratic countries.⁴⁸

However, Shadi Hamid and Steven Brooke argue that, in order to answer whether democratization prevents terrorism, the focus should be on which countries produce terrorists rather than which countries experience terrorist attacks. They argue that the focus should not be on where terrorists operate; they concede that democracies, such as the United States and Britain, are frequent targets of terrorism. Hamid and Brooke advance their “tyranny-terror” hypothesis and examine which regime types are most likely to produce terrorists. Therefore, they suggest examining the terrorists’ country of origin rather than where they operate or which countries are their targets.⁴⁹

A 2005 study published by the Freedom House offers numbers that confirm the link between autocracy and terrorism. The study found that, “Between 1999 and 2003, 70 percent of all deaths from terrorism were caused by terrorists and terrorist groups originating in Not Free societies, while only 8 percent of all fatalities were generated by

⁴⁷ Ibid

⁴⁸ Hehir. 2007

⁴⁹ Hamid, Shadi., Brooke, Steven. “Promoting Democracy to Stop Terror, Revisited.” Policy Review.no. 159. February 1, 2010 <<http://www.hoover.org/publications/policy-review/article/5285>>

terrorists and terror movements with origins in Free societies.”⁵⁰ Additionally, the attacks by terrorists originating from “not free” societies were more deadly when compared to the attacks by terrorists originating from “free” societies.⁵¹ This study certainly supports the conclusion that spreading democracy is likely to enhance the U.S. national security because democracies are significantly less likely to produce terrorists. Furthermore, democratic states will not support terrorist acts against the United States. The world's principal sponsors of international terrorism are harsh, authoritarian regimes, including Iran, North Korea, and Sudan.⁵²

Afghanistan Case Study

Afghanistan is often described as an example of a failed state serving as a terrorist safe haven and it is often argued that the failure to intervene in Afghanistan after the Soviet withdrawal in the 1980s directly jeopardized the United States’ security. As the United States troops are pulling out of Afghanistan, the time has come to evaluate whether the nation building mission in Afghanistan that has lasted for over a decade and came with a high price tag in both casualties and treasure resulted in a functional Afghan state that will no longer serve as a terrorist safe heaven.

Even though the goals of the United States strategy in Afghanistan have not always been clear and specific, it is evident that winning the “war on terror,” specifically dismantling

⁵⁰ Ibid

⁵¹ Ibid

⁵² Sean M. Lynn-Jones. "Why the United States Should Spread Democracy." Discussion Paper 98-07, Center for Science and International Affairs, Harvard University. March 1998

al Qaeda and removing the Taliban from power, has always been the main objective. In the immediate aftermath of September 11, the goals of the Bush Administration's strategy were regime change and dismantling of al Qaeda. In 2009, President Obama declared the main strategic goal in Afghanistan to be the defeat of al Qaeda.⁵³ This case study will examine to what extent nation building in Afghanistan achieves long-term success in the fight against terrorists. Specifically, this case study examines whether nation building in Afghanistan resulted in a stable state that is capable of maintaining the advantage over al Qaeda and denying al Qaeda a safe haven in Afghanistan.

a) Nation Building as an Anti-terrorism Strategy in Afghanistan

Afghanistan has traditionally been a weak state surrounded by hostile neighbors. Following the Soviet invasion in 1979, Afghanistan endured a civil war for over twenty years. In 1996, after the Soviets withdrew, the Taliban, an Islamic fundamentalist regime, established autocracy under Sharia law. Following the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001, the United States launched Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) with the goal of eradicating al Qaeda from Afghanistan. OEF was launched on October 7, 2001. In a matter of weeks, U.S. forces and Northern Alliance, its Afghan ally, captured Kabul. Despite speedy military victory, the U.S. faced many difficult challenges in the stabilization and reconstruction part of the mission. Afghanistan is a country with no national identity and no tradition of a strong central government. It is ruled by tribalism, lawlessness, and ethnic disputes.⁵⁴

⁵³ International Affairs. "The Strategic Framework for U.S. Efforts in Afghanistan." GAO-10-655R: Jun 15, 2010. Publicly Released: Jun 15, 2010. < <http://www.gao.gov/products/GAO-10-655R>>

⁵⁴ Dobbins, McGinn, et al. "America's Role in Nation-Building: From Germany to Iraq." 2003.

The Bush administration's early anti-terrorism strategy is illustrated in a memo from the Department of Defense under Secretary Donald Rumsfeld to President Bush in which Rumsfeld suggests an expansive military response. Rumsfeld argued that limiting the U.S. response to capturing terrorists hiding in "the caves of Afghanistan" is not the most effective option; he stated that the U.S. should use its military might to effect regime change in "Afghanistan and another key State (or two) that supports terrorism to strengthen political and military efforts to change policies elsewhere."⁵⁵ However, a prolonged nation building mission in Afghanistan was not a part of the Bush Administration's initial strategy. The United States initially tried to keep a small footprint in Afghanistan. The National Security Council's outline of the White House strategy to destroy the Taliban and al Qaeda dated October 16, 2001 warns against large-scale nation building efforts. The document states that, "The U.S. should not commit to any post-Taliban military involvement since the U.S. will be heavily engaged in the anti-terrorism effort worldwide."⁵⁶

Nevertheless, soon after Taliban was ousted it became clear that the White House strategy had to include expansive nation building efforts in order to achieve a lasting success. It was clear that the military victory would be only temporary as the danger of Taliban returning to power and providing a sanctuary for al Qaeda as soon as the U.S. troops left Afghanistan was evident from the beginning. Ambassador Neumann warned in 2006 that the American failure to seriously engage in nation building in Afghanistan

⁵⁵ The Office of the Secretary of Defense, Memorandum for the President, "Strategic Thoughts," September 30, 2001, Top Secret/Close Hold, 2 pp. [Excised]

⁵⁶ The Office of the Secretary of Defense, Donald Rumsfeld to Douglas Feith, "Strategy," Attachment, "U.S. Strategy in Afghanistan," National Security Council, October 16, 2001, 7:42am, Secret/Close Hold/Draft for Discussion, 7 pp.

would jeopardize the mission and benefit Taliban.⁵⁷ Therefore, without successful nation building there would be no eradication of the anti-American terrorist networks in the region.

The U.S. military eventually moved toward a strategy focused on winning over the people of Afghanistan and assisting them in building the Afghan nation. Nation building became a crucial part of the strategy in Afghanistan with the introduction of a freshly updated Counterinsurgency (COIN) doctrine, which was the main feature of the troop surge in 2009. Facing slow progress in fighting insurgents in Iraq and Afghanistan, the military updated and codified the COIN doctrine in Field Manual 3-24, jointly published by the U.S. Army and the Marines in 2006.⁵⁸ COIN is a “population-centric” counterinsurgency.⁵⁹ COIN recognizes that war is won by political rather than military victories and suggests that the focus should be on “winning hearts and minds” and limiting the influence of insurgents amongst the population. The implementation of COIN clearly indicates that the military recognized that a “shock-and-awe” campaign that was successful in bringing down Taliban and Saddam Hussein was not effective in the reconstruction phase.⁶⁰

Critics of the nation building efforts in Afghanistan have long contended that deploying American troops in Afghanistan and attempting to rebuild the Afghan society was unnecessary and unwise. Dempsey warns that, “The security of the United States does

⁵⁷ U.S. Embassy (Kabul), Cable, "Afghan Supplemental" February 6, 2006, Secret, 3 pp. [Excised]

⁵⁸ Eikenberry, Karl W. "The Limits of Counterinsurgency Doctrine in Afghanistan." *Foreign Affairs*. 12 Aug. 2013. Web. 27 Apr. 2014. <<http://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/139645/karl-w-eikenberry/the-limits-of-counterinsurgency-doctrine-in-afghanistan>>.

⁵⁹ Gentile, Gian P. "A Strategy of Tactics: Population-centric COIN and the Army." Strategic Studies Institute. 2009

⁶⁰ Ibid

not require a multiethnic, liberal democracy in Afghanistan.”⁶¹ Nation building is not a smart strategy as it puts American lives on the line; American soldiers and civilian personnel on the ground in Afghanistan present convenient targets for terrorists. Additionally, nation building is not a sustainable strategy as high cost and casualties can erode public support for the mission and jeopardize the success of the larger anti-terrorism effort.⁶²

Dempsey also argues that nation building is in effect meddling into internal politics and that it was precisely the external meddling that resulted in the emergence of Taliban. Dempsey describes Afghanistan as a relatively stable country in the period from 1930 to 1978. Soviets’ efforts to bring the Afghan communists into power disturbed the internal balance and resulted in a prolonged civil war. The era of Soviet meddling was followed by the United States’ policy of supporting the most extreme anti-Soviet and anti-modern elements. Finally, Pakistan’s internal security services supported the Taliban as it was Pakistan’s belief that the Taliban was best positioned to help secure Islamabad’s strategic interests in the region. Dempsey concludes that, “The lesson of Afghanistan is not that there hasn’t been enough outside meddling but that there has been too much.”⁶³

b) Evaluating Results

It is evident that al Qaeda has suffered a deadly blow as a result of the U.S. engagement in Afghanistan; most of the leadership has been killed or captured including Osama bin Laden. Leon Panetta, Director of the Central Intelligence Agency at the time, stated that

⁶¹ Dempsey, 2002.

⁶² Dempsey, 2002.

⁶³ Dempsey, 2002.

al Qaeda had a relatively small presence in Afghanistan in 2010 and estimated that, "We're looking at maybe 50 to 100, maybe less."⁶⁴ Panetta echoed that winning in Afghanistan means "having a country that is stable enough to ensure that there is no safe haven for al Qaeda or for a militant Taliban that welcomes al Qaeda."⁶⁵ Therefore, the success in building the Afghan state will determine whether the gains against terrorists will be maintained after the U.S. troops leave the country. The long-term success against al Qaeda will hinge on the ability of the new Afghan state to prevent resurgence of Taliban and al Qaeda.

In the *Report on Progress Toward Security and Stability in Afghanistan* published in November 2013, the Department of Defense offers evidence that the young Afghan state has a potential to prevent resurgence of Taliban and al Qaeda. According to the report, the newly established government in Kabul has gained control of the majority of the country. The Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF), a security force that includes armed forces and local, national, and border police, assumed the responsibility for security nationwide as of June 2013. The ANSF has shown ability to conduct security operations independently and has demonstrated the capability to engage insurgents what resulted in reduction of the number of security incidents compared to 2012. The report notes that the ANSF has a tactical advantage over the Taliban and that Afghans have positive perceptions of the ANSF. Additionally, despite many setbacks the ANSF has nearly doubled in size since 2009. Nevertheless, the report does question the sustainability of these encouraging results without significant long-term financial and

⁶⁴ Sonmez, Felicia. DeLong, Matt. "Panetta: 50-100 al-Qaeda remain in Afghanistan." The Washington Post. June 27, 2010 < <http://voices.washingtonpost.com/44/2010/06/panetta-50-100-al-qaeda-remain.html>>

⁶⁵ Ibid

advisory assistance.⁶⁶

The DOD report also states that the Afghan government's ability to deliver basic services to its people has been significantly improved when compared to previous years.

However, the report emphasizes that the high level of government corruption and inability to extend its influence to rural areas could eventually undermine the country's stability. Corruption has been a difficult obstacle in establishing security and the rule of law as corrupt government officials are often linked to criminal and insurgent networks.⁶⁷

It is undisputable that a significant progress has been made in building a sustainable Afghan state that makes is more difficult, although not impossible, for al Qaeda to operate. However, there is a lot of skepticism that the gains can be maintained without a continued strong U.S. military presence on the ground. According to the news reports, a significant number of the U.S. national security officials and policy makers express a bleak outlook for Afghanistan. *The Washington Post* reports that unnamed policy makers familiar with the National Intelligence Estimate, a classified document that includes input from sixteen intelligence agencies and is produced by the National Intelligence Council for the benefit of the policy makers, state that the report foresees reemergence of Taliban as the United States withdraws its troops. The new assessments predict that the gains will be eroded by 2017 even if the U.S. maintains a modest military presence beyond 2014

⁶⁶ Department of Defense. "Report on Progress Toward Security and Stability in Afghanistan." November 2013.

⁶⁷ Ibid

and continues to provide financial support to the Afghan government.⁶⁸ Nasir Shansab, a former Afghani industrialist and advisor to the Reagan Administration, stated that "Taliban and al-Qaida will take control again, and it will again be a base for terrorist operations."⁶⁹

Public Support and Cost

Nation building is a complex undertaking. The Afghanistan case study clearly indicates that nation building is an expensive effort that requires decades of outside assistance to ensure lasting results. Therefore, it is important to examine the sustainability of an anti-terrorism strategy that includes nation building in the context of public support and high cost. The United States is generally not willing to commit its military and financial resources for an extensive period of time due to domestic politics and concerns about casualties. As it was evident in the mission in Somalia in the early 1990s and most recently in Iraq and Afghanistan, the U.S. public is particularly sensitive to casualties and not likely to support a prolonged intervention that has a high price tag in terms of American lives. The decision to withdraw from Somalia in 1995 was influenced to a large extent by the horror of the American public after seeing images of U.S. soldiers being dragged through the streets of Mogadishu. America's adversaries, recognizing their weaknesses when faced with the full might of the American military, have tried to

⁶⁸ Ernesto Londoño, Karen DeYoung and Greg Miller. "Afghanistan gains will be lost quickly after drawdown, U.S. intelligence estimate warns." Washingtonpost.com. December 28, 2013. < http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/national-security/afghanistan-gains-will-be-lost-quickly-after-drawdown-us-intelligence-estimate-warns/2013/12/28/ac609f90-6f32-11e3-aecc-85cb037b7236_story.html>

⁶⁹ Hollingsworth, Barbara. "Afghanistan Will Resume Being Terrorist Haven When US Troops Depart." CNSNews.com. January 8, 2014. < <http://cnsnews.com/news/article/barbara-hollingsworth/expert-afghanistan-will-resume-being-terrorist-haven-when-us>>

capitalize on this sentiment. Saddam Hussein's strategy for the Gulf War was to inflict high casualties in the hope that the U.S. public would demand withdrawal. He was quoted as saying that the United States "does not have the stomach" to fight Iraq. Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadzic employed a similar strategy to prevent intervention in Bosnia in the 1990s. Karadzic stated that the United States and its NATO allies "cannot bear the pain" of fighting in Bosnia.⁷⁰

The American public will likely support a decision to intervene if it believes that vital U.S. interests are at stake. The decision to intervene in Afghanistan enjoyed overwhelming public support; the war in Afghanistan was viewed as justified and necessary to protect national security. Nevertheless, the initial approval, disregarding how high, dwindles in the light of high casualties. Over the duration of the war, the public support has deteriorated drastically. In a poll conducted in 2007 only 56 percent agreed that the war in Afghanistan has been worth fighting compared to 41 who disagreed. In the aftermath of the shooting incident in 2012 in which a U.S. soldier was accused of killing Afghan civilians, only 30 percent gave an affirmative response to the same question and 66 percent disagreed.⁷¹ Similarly, according to the Pew Research Center, in March 2003, 72 percent supported the Iraq war. In 2011, the Pew Research Center reported that only 48 percent of Americans stated that the United States made the right decision to use military force in Iraq, while 46 percent disagreed.⁷²

⁷⁰ Swartz, Benjamin. "Casualties, public opinion, and U.S. military intervention: implications for U.S. regional deterrence strategies." RAND. 1994

⁷¹ The Washington Post. "Fading support for Afghanistan War." The Washington Post-ABC News poll. April 11, 2012, 7:13 p.m.

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2012/04/11/gIQAyGWMBT_graphic.html>

⁷² Pew Research Center. "Iraq and Public Opinion: The Troops Come Home." December 14, 2011. <<http://pewresearch.org/pubs/2145/iraq-background-the-troops-come-home>>

Benjamin Swartz makes an important observation that most polls discussed above ask the American public about the initial decision to go into war rather than whether the United States should withdraw. He further argues that once involved, even if the cost is high and the initial support to intervene declines, the public is more likely to support an escalation that will lead to a decisive victory rather than demand immediate withdrawal. After it became clear that the Korean War will be long and costly and public approval decreased from 66 percent in August 1950 to only 39 percent in December 1950, only 11 percent of polled Americans supported immediate withdrawal. Even as casualties rose to 120,000 polls showed that only between 12 and 17 percent of the polled public favored speedy withdrawal.⁷³

It could be argued that Swartz's work is dated, having been written in 1994, and limited to Korean, Vietnam, and Gulf conflicts. In the light of what appear to be small dividends of the post-Cold War interventions, it is plausible to argue that the American public's appetite for a decisive victory even at a high cost has spoiled. The case in point was the 75 percent approval of President Obama's decision to withdraw nearly all U.S. troops from Iraq by the end of 2011.⁷⁴ However, it is important to note that public support for the withdrawal from Iraq was measured after over eight years of heavy military engagement and after the security situation in Iraq showed signs of consistent improvement. It is also important to stress that 56 percent of Americans agree that the

⁷³ Swartz, 1994.

⁷⁴ Jones, Jeffrey M. "Three in Four Americans Back Obama on Iraq Withdrawal." Gallup Politics. November 23, 2012. < <http://www.gallup.com/poll/150497/Three-Four-Americans-Back-Obama-Iraq-Withdrawal.aspx>>

United States has for the most part achieved its goals in Iraq.⁷⁵ Therefore, Swartz's conclusion appears to stand the test of time.

The cost of nation building missions is another important factor when discussing public support for future missions. Congressional Research Service estimated that the U.S. spent almost \$802 billion by the end of fiscal year 2011 on funding the war in Iraq. Some economists, after taking into account the impact on domestic economy, estimate that the cost is close to \$3 trillion.⁷⁶ Getting the support of the U.S. public for yet another nation building mission when the country is facing an unprecedented national debt and still recovering from the 2008 financial crisis would most certainly be a daunting task.

Post 9/11 Nation Building: Are We Safer Now?

As the Obama Administration is claiming success in Iraq and planning withdrawal of combat forces from Afghanistan by the end of 2014, it is still too early to judge the long-term success of nation building and whether nation building in these two countries resulted in a long-term solution to anti-American terrorism. However, currently available data, such as the data on the number, deadliness, and concentration of terrorist attacks in the period since 9/11 to present, can help paint the picture of more immediate results. The data presented in this section can be used to test the correlation between (1) nation building and terrorist attacks and (2) failed states and terrorism.

⁷⁵ Swartz, 1994.

⁷⁶ BBC News. "Iraq in War Figures." BBC News Middle East. 14 December 2011
<<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-11107739>>

According to the report issued by the National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START) Global Terrorism Database (GTD), more than 8,400 terrorist attacks killing more than 15,400 people were recorded worldwide in 2012. This marks a new record for both the number of attacks and the number of fatalities since 9/11. The previous record year for attacks was 2011 with more than 5,000 incidents. The previous record year for fatalities was 2007 with more than 12,500 deaths.⁷⁷ The terrorist attacks in 2012 occurred in 85 countries. However, START data indicates that terrorist targets moved to the countries where the U.S. has been engaged in nation building as well as surrounding countries, most notably Pakistan. For instance, Iraq, Afghanistan, and Pakistan were the scene of 54 percent of the attacks in 2012, which accounted for 58 percent of fatalities. Somalia was among the next five countries that suffered the highest number of terrorist attacks, which clearly indicates the link between terrorism and failed states. Somalia validates the claim that failed states are a security concern and that there is a significant terrorist operational presence in failed states like Somalia.⁷⁸

The data on the number and concentration of terrorist attacks post 9/11 appear to give credibility to the claim that nation building could become counter-productive, at least in the short term, as presence of the U.S. military and civilian personnel creates more targets and opportunities. However, one should keep in mind that the purpose of nation building is not to produce immediate results. Nation building is as a long-term solution that aims

⁷⁷ National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START). (2012). Global Terrorism Database [Data file]. Retrieved from <http://www.start.umd.edu/gtd>
<http://www.start.umd.edu/news/despite-fewer-attacks-western-world-global-terrorism-increasing>

⁷⁸ Ibid

to create a democratic and stable state that will eventually both reduce the potential for the rise of terrorism and become an inhospitable territory for terrorists.

Conclusion

Promoting democracy through nation building was the focal point of the Bush foreign policy due to the widespread belief, both within the Bush administration and the American public, that failed states and the lack of democracy provide a fertile ground for the rise of Islamic extremism targeting the United States. The wars in Iraq and Afghanistan became the hallmark of the Bush Presidency. President Obama's national security strategy, despite his efforts to bring the troops home, remains centered on the danger posed by failed states. The U.S. allies and the UN share the view that nation building should be included in the set of tools for ensuring global stability.

Both the proponents and critics of the idea that the most effective way to combat terrorism is to promote democracy through nation building are passionate about their belief. The arguments that support the claim that terrorism is not a concern in the majority of failed states presented in this chapter are quite convincing. However, it is evident that failed states present important opportunities for terrorist networks and there will likely be instances in the next few decades when failing and weak states will jeopardize global stability and serve as terrorist safe havens. The United States could find itself dragged into another nation building mission as a part of its efforts to ensure global stability and prevent terrorists from using failed states as launching pads for attacks of

global proportions. Available data indicates that democracies are far less likely to produce terrorists than autocracies. Therefore, democratization has a potential to provide a long-lasting antidote to terrorism. The Afghanistan case study indicates that progress is possible even in a country as complex and divided as Afghanistan. However, the progress is slow and requires decades long financial, political, and military support.

The idea of nation building as an anti-terrorism tool is extremely polarizing; the majority of academia and policy makers are either “for” or “against.” Those who propose reexamining and fixing the nation building system so it can effectively address the security danger presented by terrorism emanating from failed states are in the minority. Even after Iraq and Afghanistan, there appears to be little effort to consolidate knowledge for the purpose of applying lessons learned to future missions. The main reason is resistance among the policy makers to accept that nation building will remain a relevant part of future national security strategy. Securing public support for nation building is difficult. Nation building is a costly endeavor that requires a long commitment even after military troops leave the host country and comes with no guarantees for success.

Perhaps a good start in revamping the nation building system is to define what “failed states” means in the context of U.S. national security and, more importantly, classify weak and failing states and non-state actors operating within those states based on the likelihood of them attacking the United States and its interests. Secondly, it is time to fully understand the results that can be achieved through nation building as well as how quickly and at what cost those result can be achieved. Nation building should not be

viewed as the only, or even the principal, tool in the fight against terrorism. Nation building is as a long-term solution that aims to create a stable democratic state that will be able to both reduce the potential for the rise of terrorism and engage and eliminate terrorists operating within its borders. The main concern when discussing nation building as a part of the U.S. anti-terrorism strategy is high cost and casualties. Therefore, the United State should develop a comprehensive nation building strategy that does not necessarily involve a full-scale occupation of a country. A smart nation building strategy will also include providing sustained support for democratic elements in the target country and produce favorable results at low cost and with no American casualties.

The time to develop nation building capacities is before the United States is faced with the next security crisis emanating from a post-conflict or failed state. The time to start the reform that will result in an effective nation building apparatus is now. History shows that American people are likely to support an intervention when vital interests and national security are at stake. It is up to the leadership to develop capacities, set realistic expectations, and build alliances to ensure sustained success.

Chapter 2

How Skilled is the U.S. Military in Leading Post 9/11 Nation Building?

The traditional role of the military is to win wars by the use of force. Nowadays, policymakers and military personnel consider nation building, stability operations in military jargon, to be one of the core tasks of the U.S. military. The difference between war fighting and nation building is stark. While war fighting implies the use of force to achieve a definite goal and a clear exit strategy, nation building is characterized by achieving limited goals using limited means that very often do not include military force.⁷⁹ The U.S. military was expected to make a rapid shift from combat operations in Afghanistan and Iraq to nation building and achieve lasting success in the areas of governance and economy. Experience in the post 9/11 nation building missions in Iraq and Afghanistan indicates that soldiers' core duties now include building relationships with the locals and promoting reconciliation, establishing the rule of law and governance, and improving living conditions along with providing security and maintaining combat readiness. This is a daunting task even for the world's most powerful military.

This chapter examines whether the military has the skills to take the lead in post 9/11 nation building. Specifically, the focus in this chapter is on military leadership in the areas traditionally managed by civilian agencies, such as democratization and economic

⁷⁹ Walters, Wally Z. "The Doctrinal Challenge of Winning the Peace Against Rouge States: How Lessons from Post-World War II Germany May Inform Operations Against Saddam Hussein's Iraq." U.S. Army War College, 09 April 2002. <<http://www.au.af.mil/au/awc/awcgate/army-usawc/walters.pdf>>

development; it is evident the military's primary nation building task is establishing and maintaining security. The chapter starts with an attempt to highlight policy decisions that resulted in the military taking the lead in post 9/11 nation building missions. In order to evaluate the military's nation building skills, this chapter focuses on the military's success in democratization and economic development in Germany and Japan at the end of the Second World War, and more recently in Iraq. The chapter also examines the changes in the military's doctrine and the soldiers' attitudes toward nation building to identify whether the military is ready to embrace nation building as one of its core duties. The discussion then turns to the implications of using the military as the main tool in nation building for the wider U.S. foreign policy goals and combat readiness. The main finding is that, while the military is indispensable in providing security and supporting interagency efforts, it lacks the training and skills to lead today's complex missions, which fall under the broader definition of "nation building" rather than the more narrow definition of "state building." Consequently, this chapter proposes a "whole government" approach for securing success in future missions.

Evolution of the Military as a Lead in Nation Building

Nation building missions were unpopular in the 1990s. The prevailing view in the military establishment was that the main task of the U.S. military was to win wars and that military should not be used as a tool in national building missions. The Powell doctrine, which emerged in the 1990s and was named after General Colin Powell, states that the military should be used only when all other available means fail to achieve

desired results. Additionally, the military should only be used when the goals are clearly defined. General Powell describes the doctrine as, “Decide what you are trying to achieve politically and if it can't be achieved through political and diplomatic and economic means, and you have to use military force, then make sure you know exactly what you're using the military force for and then apply it in a decisive manner.”⁸⁰ Tasking the military with nation building is clearly at odds with the Powell Doctrine considering that nation building missions are prolonged endeavors that have broadly defined goals, such as democratization and economic recovery. Additionally, achieving these goals requires employing subtle diplomacy rather than decisive action because any nation building directed from outside, even when supported by reputable international institutions such as the United Nations, can be viewed as usurpation of the right of self-determination.⁸¹

Both the Congress and the Department of State (DoS) shared the military's view and considered nation building missions to be anomalies that did not require organizational restructuring or permanent allocation of resources. President Clinton was consistently criticized by his opponents in the Congress who claimed that his nation building missions were harming the readiness of the U.S. military. Nevertheless, President Clinton took steps to change the organizational structure of the National Security Council to better facilitate nation building missions. He established a directorate within the National Security Council to handle planning and coordination. Clinton's Presidential Decision Directive 56 issued in 1997 attempted to create a set of procedures for future planning of

⁸⁰ Maddow, Rachel. "Colin Powell Talks Rachel Maddow." MSNBC, April 1, 2009.

⁸¹ Von Bogdandy, Armin. Häußler, Stefan. Hanschmann, Felix. Utz, Raphael. State-Building, Nation-Building, and Constitutional Politics in Post-Conflict Situations: Conceptual Clarifications and an Appraisal of Different Approaches. Max Planck Yearbook of United Nations Law, Volume 9, 2005, p. 579-613.

nation building missions as well as a model for interagency cooperation. However, President Bush, after rejecting nation building as a part of the national security strategy during his presidential campaign, entirely disassembled Clinton's nation building element. There are indications that the military establishment resisted a directive by President Bush's National Security Council that would have actually improved Clinton's nation building structure. The Pentagon eventually rejected the directive.⁸²

In the absence of a nation building apparatus or an interagency structure of any kind, post 9/11 missions in Afghanistan and Iraq made it clear that the military was to take the lead in all aspects of nation building including post conflict reconstruction efforts. This is especially evident in the planning stages for the invasion of Iraq. President Bush, in the light of the slow progress in Afghanistan due to the lack of interagency cooperation, transferred the responsibility for all nonmilitary aspects of the occupation from the Department of State (DoS) to the Department of Defense (DoD). Another possible justification for his decision is that President Bush wanted to ensure total commitment to the mission and unity of command by bypassing the DoS's skepticism about the rationality of the decision to invade Iraq.⁸³ The Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA), the transitional Iraqi government, was put under the auspices of DoD. Even though retired United States Army Lieutenant General Jay Garner, the first CPA Administrator, was quickly replaced by a State Department diplomat L. Paul Bremer, the fact that Bremer continued to report to the Secretary of Defence clearly indicates that the DoD

⁸² Dobbins, James. "After the War: Nation-building From FDR to George W. Bush." Santa Monica, CA: RAND National Security Research Division, 2008.

⁸³ Ibid

continued to lead democratization and economic development.⁸⁴ Initial results of the CPA were disappointing. For instance, CPA was never fully staffed. Additionally, the CPA had an extremely high turnover and the level of expertise in the lower ranks was unsatisfactory. However, at the end of 2005, perhaps after recognizing the shortcomings of a policy that did not allow for a robust presence of civilian experts in the field, the Bush administration deployed the first DoS-led Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs), which included civilian political and economic experts. The efforts to increase the number of PTRs intensified in 2007 following President Bush's announcement that the United States would double the number of PRTs in Iraq.⁸⁵

Putting the Military in the Lead: Smart Decision or a Mistake?

Some analysts and policy makers believe that the U.S. military is capable of taking the lead if given the appropriate tools and authorizations. Proponents of this view point to nation building experiences after the Second World War and the reconstruction efforts in Germany and Japan that were spearheaded by the U.S. military. The United States' military was required for the first time in its history to transition from war fighting to stabilization efforts. Germany and Japan were a complete success that has not been repeated since.⁸⁶ It could be argued that the decision of the Bush administration to put the military in charge of the reconstruction efforts in Afghanistan and Iraq is an attempt to

⁸⁴ Dobbins, James., Seth G. Jones., Benjamin, Runkle., Siddharth Mohandas. "Occupying Iraq: A History of the Coalition Provisional Authority." Santa Monica, CA: RAND National Security Research Division, 2009.

⁸⁵ Perito, Robert M. "Provincial Reconstruction Teams in Iraq." United States Institute of Peace. March 2007

⁸⁶ Dobbins, et al. "America's Role in Nation-Building: From Germany to Iraq." 2003

duplicate the success in Germany and Japan rather than build on the experiences gained in the post Cold War nation building missions in Somalia, Haiti, Bosnia, and Kosovo.⁸⁷

In the absence of a dedicated nation building apparatus, the DoD emerges as a logical lead considering that the DoD is best funded and the most powerful tool in the U.S. arsenal. The best alternative to the DoD appears to be the DoS and there are signs that the DoS is attempting to create a standing nation building office. One notable effort is the creation of the State Department Office of the Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization (S/CRS) in July 2004. Its official mandate is to “help stabilize and reconstruct societies in transition from conflict or civil strife, so they can reach a sustainable path toward peace, democracy and a market economy.”⁸⁸ S/CRS’s role is to coordinate interagency efforts, including both planning and operations, and to develop expertise by building on knowledge from past missions.⁸⁹ However, the lack of funding could render S/CRS ineffective and inconsequential.⁹⁰ It is plausible to argue that putting the DoD in the lead will make it more difficult for the DoS, the agency that has far more expertise in the area of international relations and development, to get sufficient funding for development of its nation building capabilities.

Some argue that reliance upon the U.S. military to lead nation building might have a negative effect on how those missions are prioritized and carried out. The main argument

⁸⁷ Dobbins, et al. “After the War: Nation-building From FDR to George W. Bush.” 2008

⁸⁸ Hall, Laura A. “Stimson Brief: The Future of S/CRS.” The Stimson Center. June 29, 2010 <http://www.stimson.org/images/uploads/research-pdfs/Future_of_S_CRS.pdf>

⁸⁹ Ibid

⁹⁰ Logan and Preble. Failed States and Flawed Logic: The Case against a Standing Nation-Building Office. 2006

is that the military does not have the necessary expertise to engage in tasks such as the rule of law, governance, and economic recovery as it has no training or experience in these areas. Nation building missions led by the U.S. military are likely to focus on short-term objectives such as providing security and building ad-hoc institutions of governance. On the other hand, solutions traditionally offered by civilian agencies such as the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) tend to be more comprehensive and permanent.⁹¹

Another important consideration is that the U.S. military might become a de facto primary foreign policy instrument and negatively impact the State Department's credibility. Having the military emerge as a diplomatic instrument could also endanger foreign policy goals. Researcher Nina Serifino observed that, "the use of U.S. military personnel in state-building activities may convey mixed signals in activities where the objective is to promote democracy and enhance civilian control . . . by reinforcing stereotypes in underdeveloped nations – such as that military forces are more competent than civilians – or legitimize the use of military forces for civilian governmental responsibilities."⁹²

The following two sections test the validity of these opposing views by examining the level of success the military was able to achieve in the areas of democratization and economic development in nation building missions at the end of the Second World War

⁹¹ Wallace, Robert Daniel. "Whither State? The Institutional Politics of American Nation-building Policy." *Contemporary Security Policy*, 2010, 31:1, 114-133

⁹² Wallace, 2010.

in Germany and Japan, and more recently in Iraq. The case studies focus on how the success achieved, or the lack of success, exemplifies the military's nation building skills.

Examining Experience Before 9/11: Germany and Japan

Following Germany's surrender in May 1945, the country and its capital were divided into sectors and each sector was controlled by one of the allied forces - United States, United Kingdom, France, and Soviet Union. The command of the American sector was given to the Office of Military Government, United States (OMGUS). Considering that the German civilian government had been dismantled, the military governors were in charge of their respective sectors. The first military governor of the American sector was General Dwight D. Eisenhower who delegated almost all responsibility to General Lucius D. Clay.⁹³ In the initial phase of the occupation, the United States policy, which was articulated in the Joint Chiefs of Staff's directive 1067 (JCS 1067), was punitive and reflected the belief that Germans carried a collective guilt for the war. OMGUS was tasked with demobilizing the German military, establishing security, initiating denazification of the German society, and democratization.⁹⁴

After banning the Nazi Party and disbanding the German military, the U.S. military focused on eliminating Nazi influence from press, business and financial institutions, and schools. The military successfully undertook the task of dismantling financial cartels,

⁹³ Dobbins, McGinn, et al. "America's Role in Nation-Building: From Germany to Iraq." 2003.

⁹⁴ Jennings, Salvatore Ray. "The Road Ahead: Lessons in Nation Building from Japan, Germany, and Afghanistan for Post War Iraq." United States Instituted for Peace. Peaceworks No. 49. First published April 2003.

revising textbooks, as well as extracting restitutions from the remnants of the German economy. The purge of the German society was of massive proportions. The U.S. military investigated a total of thirteen million Germans for war crimes or Nazi affiliations and charged more than three million for various offenses. Despite initial limitations on economic assistance imposed by Washington due to the belief that only a retributive economic policy could eliminate German militarism, Clay devoted significant effort to improving the standard of living in the American sector. He successfully restored public utilities, cleared roads, and delivered rations and supplies to prevent hunger and disease.⁹⁵

Military commanders in the field called from the very beginning for rehabilitation of German society and recognized the importance of working with local representatives. In late 1945, General George Patton, the governor of the Bavaria province, warned that “more than half the German people were Nazis and we would be in a hell of a fix if we removed all Nazi party members from office.”⁹⁶ The initial purge of the German society left only a small number of qualified individuals to assist in democratization efforts. Nevertheless, Clay selected three local Germans who had “clean” past, meaning they had not belonged to the Nazi party or committed war crimes, and appointed them as regional administrators in the U.S. sector. Their main duties included advising and assisting Clay in development and implementation of various policies. They were also tasked with finding other “clean” German officials who were qualified to serve as advisors to the U.S.

⁹⁵ Ibid

⁹⁶ Jennings, 2003.

military. Clay relied on advice from these “clean” Germans when establishing police force, quasi courts, and local administrations.⁹⁷

The military recognized the importance of winning over the local population even when policy makers in Washington favored a more punitive policy. Clay warned Washington that not addressing food shortages and economic devastation would result in a communist Germany. Clay is quoted as saying that “there is no choice between becoming a communist on 1,500 calories and a believer in democracy on 1,000 calories.”⁹⁸ While Washington was deliberating whether to change course and adopt a less retaliatory policy, Clay took matters into his own hands and used a loophole in JCS 1067 to increase daily humanitarian rations to 1,500 calories per day.⁹⁹

By the summer of 1947, due to the intensifying of the Cold War and economic stagnation in Europe, Washington changed course and began focusing on restarting the German economy as a part of a wider European recovery plan. The United States viewed a democratic Germany with strong economy as the only viable exit strategy and a way to limit the Soviet influence. As a result, JCS 1067 was replaced by a much less punitive JCS 1779. This change in policy enabled the military to achieve rapid success in both democratization and economic recovery. Under JCS 1779 more than ninety percent of Germans purged under JCS 1067 were rehabilitated and General Clay was able to further increase the rations. As the standard of living improved and promises of economic recovery translated into action, Germans embraced the reforms. After the French, British,

⁹⁷ Ibid

⁹⁸ Ibid

⁹⁹ Ibid

and American sectors were united into one entity, local governance was restored. The new entity was awarded common currency, license plates, and identity documentation.¹⁰⁰ The biggest challenge proved to be the beginning of the Cold War as Germany was caught in the struggle between the United States and Soviet Union. Even though it took forty-five years to reunite the country, Germany developed into a democratic society with a thriving economy. The military's leadership under General Clay resulted in a complete success.¹⁰¹

Japan surrendered unconditionally in August 1945 following the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. The United States was the only occupying force in Japan and General Douglas MacArthur was in charge of all reconstruction efforts. The mission in Japan showed that a democratic society can be introduced into a non-western country that had no democratic history. The success in Japan is viewed as another example of the success of the U.S. military leadership in nation building as the military had a complete charge of the nation building efforts. The U.S. military under the leadership of General MacArthur spearheaded political, social, and economic change.¹⁰²

The occupation policy for Japan was articulated in the *United States Initial Post-Surrender Policy Relating to Japan* (Potsdam) and the JCS directive 1380/15. While the Potsdam clearly identified reparations, demilitarization, and democratization as the main goals of the occupation, it was rather ambiguous about the role of the Japan's emperor. However, the emperor proved to be no obstacle to the reforms as he fully supported

¹⁰⁰ Ibid

¹⁰¹ Dobbins, McGinn, et al. "America's Role in Nation-Building: From Germany to Iraq" (2003)

¹⁰² Ibid

MacArthur's actions. It is important to note that, while the official policy for the occupation of Japan was to be formulated by the allied powers, in reality MacArthur and his administration named Supreme Commander Allied Powers (SCAP) directed all democratization and reconstruction efforts. SCAP consisted of about a dozen sections. The most influential sections were the Government section that oversaw political reform and the Economic and Scientific section that oversaw economic reform.¹⁰³

The military launched the reforms immediately following the occupation. Land reform was one of the first and most consequential programs. Under MacArthur's land reform, the government bought the land from absentee landlords and redistributed the land to tenant farmers. MacArthur believed that the land reform was one of his most important successes. He remarked that, "The redistribution formed a strong barrier against any introduction of Communism in rural Japan. Every farmer in the country was now a capitalist in his own right."¹⁰⁴ The military accomplished great success in the sphere of civil liberties and freedom of speech as well. Workers were given the right to organize and strike, political prisoners were released from jail, and women were given the right to vote for the first time in the Japanese history. The military undertook reforms of the educational system as well.¹⁰⁵

MacArthur elected to keep Japanese government officials who were not implicated in war crimes in office from the beginning of the occupation. However, they worked under his close supervision and their primary role was to legitimize decisions made by MacArthur. This was especially evident during the process of ratification of Japan's

¹⁰³ Jennings, 2003.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid

¹⁰⁵ Ibid

postwar constitution. While the constitution was ratified by the Japanese parliament, no member of the parliament participated in the drafting of the constitution. The constitution was drafted by a constitutional convention composed of U.S. military officers and civilians. The draft provoked a negative reaction from the parliament members as it awarded extensive political, social, and economic rights and liberties. Most remarkably, Article 9 of the draft read, “The Japanese people forever renounce war as a sovereign right of the nation . . . land, sea and air forces as well as other war potential will never be maintained. The right of belligerency of the state will not be recognized.”¹⁰⁶ Parliament members argued that such a constitution was incompatible with Japanese traditions. Despite initial resistance by the lawmakers, MacArthur was resolute in his mission to transform Japan into a liberal democracy. After he threatened to put up the draft for public referendum, the parliament proceeded to ratify the constitution draft in its entirety. Japan regained sovereignty in 1953. Since then, Japan has continued to grow as a strong democracy and a formidable economic force.¹⁰⁷

The military had a total command of all nation building aspects in both Germany and Japan. It could be argued that the unity of command, which was achieved by putting the military in the lead, was the biggest contributor to the success. The unity of command ensured total commitment to the mission and maximum efficacy. With the military in the lead, the possibility of tensions between military and civilian agencies that could have slowed down the progress was eliminated. The military was resolute and methodical in transforming Germany and Japan into democracies. Clay and MacArthur recognized the

¹⁰⁶ Ibid

¹⁰⁷ Ibid

importance of working with local officials and had the foresight to co-op local structures and use them to legitimize their policy decisions. However, it is important to point out elements that are unique to the German and Japanese experiences and that have not been present in post Cold War and post 9/11 nation building efforts. It is plausible to argue that the set of these unique elements, rather than nation building skills of the military, was the biggest contributor to the success.

It could be argued that the success in Germany and Japan is due to the fact that these were cases of “state building” rather than “nation building.” In political science, state building is broadly defined as the establishment of government structures while nation building refers to the construction of a national identity.¹⁰⁸ Additionally, while nation failure is often accompanied by state failure, rebuilding a failed state does not necessarily include constructing a national identity.¹⁰⁹ When used in policy discussions in the context of the post-Cold War and post 9/11 interventions, the term nation building has a much broader meaning and refers to implementing political and economic reforms in a society emerging from conflict, generally with no existing national identity, with the goal of transforming that society into a stable democracy.¹¹⁰ Considering that both Germany and Japan were countries with strong national identity where the military was focused on co-opting existing government institutions, those missions were limited to state building.

They do not fit the wider definition of nation building that emerged post-Cold War and

¹⁰⁸ Von Bogdandy, Armin., Häußler, Stefan., Hanschmann, Felix., and Utz, Raphael. “State-Building, Nation-Building, and Constitutional Politics in Post-Conflict Situations: Conceptual Clarifications and an Appraisal of Different Approaches.” *Max Planck Yearbook of United Nations Law*, Volume 9, 2005, p. 579-613.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid

¹¹⁰ Dobbins, James., Jones, Seth G., Crane, Keith., and Cole DeGrasse, Beth. “The Beginner’s Guide to Nation-Building.” Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2007.
<<http://www.rand.org/pubs/monographs/MG557>>

post 9/11, which is arguably a more complex endeavor as it contains elements of both state building and nation building.

Furthermore, Germany had some experience with democracy in the years prior to Second World War. The Weimar Republic, predecessor of Nazi Germany, had a parliamentary government with active political parties. Additionally, Germany was surrounded by well-established democracies and was quickly integrated into NATO.¹¹¹ In the Japanese experience, even though Japan had no prior experience with democracy, the military encountered no meaningful opposition. The official Japanese government, even after they fully recognized the magnitude of the social and economic reforms, assumed the role of onlookers and did not attempt to push back in a meaningful sense. The emperor showed no willingness to challenge the reforms and encouraged full cooperation.¹¹² It is also important to note that there was no significant German or Japanese resistance following the surrender of their armed forces.

The end of the Cold War marked the beginning of an era of frequent and prolonged nation building engagements by the United States, both unilaterally and as a member of multinational coalitions. While the role of the U.S. military was critical in the missions in Somalia, Haiti, Bosnia, and Kosovo, the U.S. military did not have the control of the reconstructions efforts as it did in Germany and Japan; democratization and economic recovery were for the most part carried out by civilian agencies. The level of success achieved in Germany and Japan has not been repeated in the post-Cold War missions,

¹¹¹ Dobbins, McGinn, et al. "America's Role in Nation-Building: From Germany to Iraq." 2003.

¹¹² Jennings, 2003.

which were cases of state failure aggravated by nation failure. The mission in Kosovo is often viewed as the most successful post–Cold War nation building mission. In Kosovo, free democratic local and national elections took place two years after the conflict ended and the economy has been showing impressive growth second only to the economic growth of Germany. While the role of the military in establishing security was the key for success, it was the participation of civilian agencies and international cooperation that ensured lasting results. The success of the Kosovo mission is mainly due to excellent management and collaboration in the international community. The mission had a remarkable unity of command despite broad international participation of both military and civilian agencies.¹¹³

Examining Experience Post 9/11: Iraq

After the terrorist attacks on 9/11, the military was once again asked to take the lead in nation building and bring about the level of success it achieved in Germany and Japan. However, in Afghanistan and Iraq the military faced an environment drastically different from the environment in Germany and Japan after the Second World War. While the U.S. military faced little resistance in Germany and Japan and established security relatively quickly, it has been fighting deadly insurgency in Afghanistan and Iraq from the beginning of the occupation. There is no strong national Afghan or Iraqi identity and there are very few governmental structures and qualified local officials to serve as reliable partners to the U.S. military.

¹¹³ Ibid

The post 9/11 mission in Iraq represents an excellent case study as it provides an opportunity to evaluate the military's skills in leading today's more complex nation building missions. Following the conclusion of combat operations in Iraq, the U.S. military forces were expected to rapidly transition into nation building part of the mission. The U.S. military had the responsibility to both provide security and lead all aspects of nation building efforts. The military's responsibilities included providing basic services to the impoverished population, establishing the rule of law and governance, and administering micro and macro grants. There was no notable interagency structure on the ground at the beginning of the occupation and the responsibility for nation building belonged solely to the military.¹¹⁴

U.S. Army War College released an important study authored by Colonel Mark L. Edmonds that provides an insider look into the challenges that the military faced in the initial stages of its nation building mission in Iraq. Colonel Edmonds paints two different pictures – one of the wider area of Baghdad from April 2004 to February 2005 and one of Northern Iraq from August 2006 to December 2007. Despite some geographical and demographical differences outlined in the case studies, the nation building tasks were comparable. The security situation in Northern Iraq in early 2006 was similar to that in Baghdad in 2004. The military focus in both cases was governance, economics, rule of law, and security.¹¹⁵

¹¹⁴ Dobbins, "After the War: Nation-building From FDR to George W. Bush." 2008.

¹¹⁵ Edmonds, Mark L. "The Army's Role in Nation Building." U.S. Army War College, 27 February 2009. Available at: <http://www.dtic.mil/cgi-bin/GetTRDoc?AD=ADA494717>

Colonel Edmonds's study shows that, even if the military was able to move forward in the areas of governance and the rule of law, sustainable results were achieved only when significant interagency structure and expertise from the civilian agencies was present on the ground. Colonel Edmonds concludes that the expertise of the Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs) brought sustainable results in Iraq.¹¹⁶

a) Baghdad from April 2004 to February 2005

When the U.S. forces took control of the Baghdad area, its population, a mix of Sunni and Shia, was six to seven million in an area of approximately 200 square miles. Sadr City, a predominately Shia zone with more than two and a half million residents and the infrastructure to support only 500,000, is also a part of Baghdad. The transfer of administrative duties from DoD's Office of Reconstruction and Humanitarian Assistance, an agency created before the invasion to take on the role of an administrator until the elections, to the CPA did not result in much needed interagency structure on the ground.¹¹⁷

The U.S. military in the wider area of Baghdad faced a wide spectrum of challenges that clearly surpassed its expertise and resources. The main problems were poor living conditions, broken and inadequate infrastructure, and a weak economy with a 61 percent unemployment rate. The military was expected to address all these issues while simultaneously providing security to both Sunni and Shia population.¹¹⁸

¹¹⁶ Edmonds, 2009.

¹¹⁷ Edmonds, 2009.

¹¹⁸ Edmonds, 2009.

The military's initial focus was improving the living conditions by rebuilding infrastructure. While restoring essential public services, the military undertook a campaign to educate the public about the democratic process and build up the credibility of the new Iraqi government. Creating sustainable employment opportunities was also high on the priorities list as the commanders in the field related high insurgency to high unemployment rates. Another focus was training the Iraqi police force and army. The U.S. military also had the task of overseeing the first democratic elections scheduled for January 2005.¹¹⁹

Even without significant participation of civilian and diplomatic agencies, the U.S. military made noteworthy achievements. The military completed over the 800 civil engineering projects worth \$104 million, built six hundred schools, and disbursed about \$8.3 million in micro and macro grants. About 20,000 Iraqis were employed on infrastructure and sanitation projects. Notable progress was made in training Iraqi local police and the army. The military funded and equipped fourteen police academies and trained seven Iraqi army battalions. In order to increase credibility of the local government, the military gave credit for all these accomplishments to the local authorities. As a result, the elections in January 2005 had a turnout rate of 51 percent.¹²⁰

However, the successes were short lived as the U.S. forces had limited resources and could not apply the same focus on every neighborhood. As a result, the security situation disintegrated as the levels of sectarian violence increased. The military had to abandon

¹¹⁹ Edmonds, 2009.

¹²⁰ Edmonds, 2009.

its focus on democratization and economic development and put all resources into improving security. Subsequently, both the living standard of the population and the credibility of the local government decreased.¹²¹

b) Northern Iraq from August 2006 to December 2007

The second case study is Northern Iraq, more specifically the area of Tikrit, which is the regional center of Salah ad Din province. This area is the birthplace of the ousted Iraqi president Saddam Hussein. Therefore, it is predominately Sunni and has a large number of former Ba-ath party officials. The main focus of the U.S. military in this area was establishing local governance and the rule of law while maintaining security. The area of Tikrit was very specific as it required integration of the former supporters of Saddam Hussein and the Ba-ath party and the newly established Shia central government in Baghdad. In order to achieve that task, the military placed a priority on establishing communication channels and building trust between the provincial and central government.¹²²

There was one notable difference between Baghdad and the Tikrit area. The U.S. military in the Tikrit area was supported by one of the first PRTs in Iraq. PRTs in Iraq were under the control of the State Department and their main task was to pursue political goals of the United States by building relationships with the local governments through a variety of initiatives designed to improve local governance and security.¹²³ Even though PRTs

¹²¹ Edmonds, 2009.

¹²² Edmonds, 2009.

¹²³ Abbaszadeh, Nima. Crow, Mark. El-Khoury, Marianne. Gandomi, Jonathan. Kuwayama, David. MacPherson, Christopher. Nutting, Meghan. Parker, Nealin. Weiss, Taya. "Provincial Reconstruction

did not bring additional resources, they filled the expertise gap in the area of governance, economics, rule of law, and public diplomacy.¹²⁴ This kind expertise is precisely what had been missing.

One of the most important nation building tasks in Northern Iraq was establishing the rule of law by supporting local law enforcement. After the combat operations ended, the military started training local police and prosecutors as well building police stations, courts, and secure residences for local judges. Introduction of PRTs resulted in accelerated and sustainable progress. For instance, personnel from the United States Department of Justice contingent of the PRTs provided much needed expertise in the rule of law part of the mission. The end result was a credible legal process and a skilled Iraqi legal staff. The Justice Department contingent assisted in facilitation of the communications between the provincial government and the central government in Baghdad through its links with the U.S. Embassy. At the same time, the Department of State governance experts worked with the military to help establish a functioning and trusting relationship between the provincial and central government. After the PRTs assumed parts of the national building mission, the military was able to focus on rebuilding infrastructure and improving security.¹²⁵ With the presence of the right experts from the Justice Department and the State Department on the ground, the nation building mission in Northern Iraq became a model for interagency effort.

Teams: Lessons and Recommendations.” Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs, Princeton University, January 2008

¹²⁴ Edmonds, 2009.

¹²⁵ Edmonds, 2009.

The importance of joint work between the military and civilian agencies is evident in the effort to establish dialogue between the provincial leaders and the central government. Because the Tikrit area was filled with former sympathizers of Saddam's regime, representatives of the Shia central government in Baghdad were reluctant to visit the area and provincial leaders from Tikrit refused to travel to Baghdad due to security concerns. This problem was resolved through interagency efforts. While DoS and DoJ personnel worked with provincial leaders, the U.S. Ambassador in Baghdad pressured the central government to meet with provincial officials. To minimize security concerns, the military agreed to transport key provincial leaders to Baghdad. The result was the visit by Prime Minister, Minister of Defense, Minister of the Interior and Minister of Electricity to the province in August 2007.¹²⁶ The interagency effort succeeded in building a lasting understanding between the central government and the provincial officials. It is clear that no single agency or the military alone could have achieved the same result.

Soldiers as Nation Builders: Military Attitudes Are Changing

Prior to the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, the U.S military was not open to incorporating nation building into its doctrine. The military doctrine published in 2001 prior to the 9/11 attacks did not contain any references to nation building operations even though at that time the U.S. forces were performing peacekeeping operations in Bosnia and Kosovo.¹²⁷ Some analysts point out that the resistance to include the term nation building in the U.S. military's Joint Dictionary is an example of how hesitant the military leadership was to

¹²⁶ Edmonds, 2009.

¹²⁷ Walters, 2002.

define nation building as a military operation. The resistance seems natural considering the difference between warfare operations and stability operations. In its essence, the warfare doctrine includes achieving total victory and a speedy withdrawal. On the other hand, nation building operations employ limited means to achieve a set of specific goals over an extended period of time.¹²⁸

Experience in Iraq and Afghanistan persuaded the military establishment that, in the absence of other sound alternatives, the DoD would continue to be asked to take the lead in nation building missions. It became clear that nation building has become a standard military operation and that military doctrine should reflect that change. Department of Defense Directive 3000.05 (DODD 3000.05) issued in November 2005 states that “stability operations are a core U.S. military mission that the Department of Defense shall be prepared to conduct with proficiency equivalent to combat operations.”¹²⁹ Analysts stress the importance of DODD 3000.05 as it shifts the focus from combat operations to stability operations and asserts that stability operations have a more important impact on the national security objectives than traditional combat operations.¹³⁰ Additionally, U.S. Army Field Manual 3-07, a principal military publication that contains information and guidance for soldiers serving in the field, now makes references to a new type of victory that includes “power to promote participation in government, spur economic

¹²⁸ Walters, 2002.

¹²⁹ U.S. Department of Defense, Department of Defense Directive 3000.05 (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Defense, September 16, 2009)

¹³⁰ Edmonds, Mark L. “The Army’s Role in Nation Building.” U.S. Army War College, 27 February 2009. Available at: <http://www.dtic.mil/cgi-bin/GetTRDoc?AD=ADA494717>

development, and address the root causes of conflict among the disenfranchised populations of the world.”¹³¹

Another relevant topic in the context of the military leading nation building is whether soldiers whose training focuses on traditional war fighting have the right attitude to conduct nation building operations. Volker C. Franke and Karen Guttieri in the study entitled *Picking Up the Pieces: Are United States Officers Ready for Nation Building* present their findings on this topic. They examine whether soldiers who had been trained to maneuver tanks and fire weapons are equipped with knowledge and attitude to discuss local politics and administer microloans to local entrepreneurs. The study was published in 2009, when the nation building missions in Afghanistan and Iraq were in a full swing, and aims to follow up on the finding of previously conducted studies that officers with operational experience view nation building as less fulfilling and not as vital to the central role of the U.S. military.¹³²

Franke and Guttieri collected empirical data to determine if military officers have the necessary mental preparedness to make the rapid shift from combat to stabilization operations. Their sampling included considerations of the military branch and the branch of service (combat, combat support, and combat service support), field experience, gender, and sociopolitical views. Respondents were mid-career, mid-level officers who are likely to be involved in ongoing or future stability operations. Some of the questions

¹³¹ Perez, Celestino. “Politics and the Soldier: on the Limits of Nation-Building as a Political and Military Objective.” 2010. APSA 2010 Annual Meeting Paper. <<http://ssrn.com/abstract=1642895>>

¹³² Franke, Volker C., Guttieri, Karen. “Picking Up the Pieces: Are United States Officers Ready for Nation Building?” *Journal of Political and Military Sociology*, 2009, Vol. 37, No. 1 (Summer): 1 -25

respondents were asked to answer were whether (1) “peacekeeping missions take the fighting edge away,” (2) “they liked the human side associated with peacekeeping missions,” and (3) “a soldier who is well-trained in military skills still needs additional skills for peacekeeping missions.”¹³³ Franke and Guttieri found that officers across all military branches expressed comparable levels of support for stability operations. On the other hand, there were notable differences when they compared responses of combat and non-combat officers.¹³⁴

Franke and Guttieri found that 59 percent of combat support officers disagreed that peacekeeping missions negatively impact combat readiness compared to 44 percent of combat officers. They also found that 67 percent of combat support officers stated that they liked the “human side” of the peace keeping missions compared to 52 percent of the combat officers. Over 90 percent of respondents agreed that soldiers primarily trained for combat need special skills to conduct peacekeeping missions. Over 70 percent of respondents agreed that peace keeping skills are relevant to their military training. More than half of respondents agreed that they could make a contribution in a peacekeeping mission.¹³⁵

Another important finding is that more than half of respondents from all branches stated that it would be difficult to shift from combat to peacekeeping operations and that the limitation of using force only in self-defense makes the peacekeeping job more difficult. Between 80 and 90 percent of respondents stated that cooperation between military and

¹³³ Franke, Guttieri. 2009

¹³⁴ Franke, Guttieri. 2009

¹³⁵ Franke, Guttieri. 2009

civilian agencies is essential for success in nation building. Over 80 and 90 percent of respondents agreed that building a rapport with locals and developing cultural and ethnical sensitivity is important for mission success.¹³⁶

Franke and Guttieri state that their findings differ from the findings of the studies conducted immediately following the end of the Cold War. Post Cold-War studies indicated that senior military officers did not view nation building as being central to the U.S. military's mission. Franke and Guttieri found that military officers today are aware that stabilization and peace operations are an important part of the military's job and they expressed willingness to sharpen their skills in that area through additional training. Additionally, the difference in the attitudes between different branches and branch services seems to be diminishing.¹³⁷

Franke and Guttieri found that officers at all levels recognize the importance of cooperation between military and civilian agencies in the context of nation building. They believe that global institutions should be strengthened and that coordination with civilian and non-governmental agencies as well as with allies and local population is essential for success. Franke and Guttieri conclude that that the majority of respondents in their sample are cognitively ready to make the switch from combat to peace keeping and stabilization operations.¹³⁸

¹³⁶ Franke, Guttieri. 2009

¹³⁷ Franke, Guttieri. 2009

¹³⁸ Franke, Guttieri. 2009

Is There a Price to Pay?

As the U.S. military is building capacity and expertise it currently lacks in nation building missions, there is a danger that its war fighting capabilities will deteriorate. If the military training focuses on non-combat missions, combat capabilities could become neglected and military readiness could suffer.¹³⁹ While there have been no obvious signs that the U.S. military capabilities and readiness have been negatively affected due to its continuous engagements in stability operations, the Israeli experience during the 2006 Lebanon War can serve as a warning of what happens when the military loses sight of its primary job.

In the late 1990s, Israeli military leadership made a conscious decision to focus its training on non-combat and unconventional military operations. Military training was restructured to emphasize counter insurgency and border protection. The border protection operations performed at the time included six-month deployments with a one-month break in between each deployment. As a result, at the beginning of the 2006 Lebanon War Israeli Defense Force was unprepared for high intensity combat operations. The soldiers did not possess tactical skills and coordination capabilities. At the beginning of the war, as a direct result of the focus on unconventional military operations, Israeli Defense Force, despite being the most formidable military in the region, was unable to overwhelm a much inferior enemy.¹⁴⁰

¹³⁹ Wallace, 2010.

¹⁴⁰ Wallace, 2010.

A number of U.S. military leaders have voiced their concern about the impact of stability operations on the combat readiness of the American military. In 2007, then Army's Chief of Staff General Peter Schoomaker testified that he was concerned about the readiness of the U.S. military despite the considerable amount of technical and combat resources available. In a 2008 white paper dealing with the state of traditional combat skills in the U.S. Army, three U.S. Army colonels who served in Iraq as brigade commanders stated that as much as ninety percent of the soldiers in Iraq were performing duties outside their training. For instance, artillery soldiers were required to drive trucks. They observed that, as a result of these unconventional duties, the soldiers lost the skills they obtained during their military training. A significant number of soldiers were not able to perform basic combat tasks at a satisfactory level during subsequent combat trainings.¹⁴¹

Conclusion

The German and Japanese experiences paint a picture of a complete success when the military is given absolute control of the nation building efforts. On the other hand, Iraq is an example of the military struggling to achieve a lasting success despite having total control of the mission. Therefore, it is important to identify factors that contributed to the success on one hand and hindered progress on the other.

¹⁴¹ Wallace, 2010.

The most notable factor is the level of complexity of the mission; it could be argued that the military is skilled enough to lead missions limited to “state building” but not missions that also include the “nation building” element. State building, as exemplified in Germany and Japan, is an easier endeavor as it does not require constructing a national identity and building legitimacy of newly established state institutions. In both Germany and Japan there was a sense of strong national identity. The military achieved the success by co-opting existing institutions and reforming an already established economic base. On the other hand, the mission in Iraq was a case of both “state building” and “nation building” as it required building a national identity and constructing democratic government institutions and economy in a country that had no experience with democracy or a solid economic base.

Another important factor is the unity of command. It is plausible to argue that giving the military the lead in all aspects of nation building, as was the case in Germany and Japan, is the safest way to ensure unity of command and complete dedication to the mission. However, Kosovo exemplifies that the unity of command can be achieved in missions that have wide participation of both military and civilian agencies. The success in the area of democratization and economic recovery in Kosovo is the result of the work of civilian agencies while the military was focused on its traditional role of providing security. Reconstruction can be started only after security is established. The mission in Iraq evidences that when security situation requires full attention and resources of the military reconstruction goals cannot be achieved by military alone. The Iraq case study shows that success was possible only after civilian agencies relieved the military of the

reconstruction tasks and the military was able to focus on its traditional role of providing security and supporting interagency efforts. Therefore, the leadership and skills of the civilian sector, rather than the military's leadership, produced results.

Considering the dangers emanating from failed states, the more complex nation building missions, such as the post 9/11 mission in Iraq, are likely to become the norm in the foreseeable future.¹⁴² It is clear that the U.S military will continue to play an important part in future missions as the military is indispensable in establishing security. Recent revisions of the military doctrine to include stabilization operations as well as the change in the attitudes across military ranks exemplify that the military establishment has recognized nation building as one of its core duties. However, both the leadership and rank and file soldiers, while admitting the need for additional training, call for a greater assistance from the civilian sector and an effective interagency structure. The military should not be expected to lead projects on the rule of law, governance, and economy. Requiring the military to develop those capabilities has a potential of diminishing its ability to defend homeland and win conventional wars. Additionally, the military taking the leadership has a potential to undermine the efforts of the DoS to develop nation building capabilities.

a) Exploring Solutions: Whole Government Approach

Analysts, scholars, as well as officials inside the government have been calling for a "whole government" approach to nation building. This approach will require willingness and resources to develop effective interdepartmental processes. For the whole

¹⁴² Chapter 1, pages 16-21, discusses the dangers posed by failed states.

government approach to work, there will have to be a strong relationship between the military and civilian agencies in both planning and execution, which has not been the case in the past. For instance, in Iraq many have become frustrated with persistent interagency tensions best described by Army Lt. Gen. Mark Hertling's statement that very often he had to "force the State Department" to comply with his directions. Lt. Gen. Hertling said, "You do have to sometimes be heavy handed and say, 'this is what you're going to do or we're going to stop the convoy support for you. What do you say about that, Mr. Ambassador?'" ¹⁴³

Building a whole government approach will also require civilian departments and agencies that are capable to take over the nation building aspects the military is not trained to carry out. It appears that some important work in this area has been started; S/CRS's Civilian Response Corps (CRS) seem to be a step in the right direction. The CRSs are designed to employ 250 highly skilled personnel from civilian agencies and will be able to deploy to the crisis area to carry out stability operations with 48 hours notice. Besides the DoS personnel, CRSs will be staffed with personnel from the Departments of Justice, Agriculture, Homeland Security, Treasury, Commerce, Health and Human Services, and USAID. ¹⁴⁴ Therefore, it is of paramount importance that the Congress appropriates sufficient funding that will enable the DoS to continue building up its capacities.

¹⁴³ Magnuson, Stew. "Playing Nice." National Defense, 94.673 (1e20): 36-40

¹⁴⁴ Magnuson, National Defense, 94.673

The fact that CRSs will not include personnel from the DoD does not seem to be creating a problem in the military establishment as the military supports the project and the Defense Secretary Robert Gates has been calling for assistance from civilian agencies in nation building.¹⁴⁵ The Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR), the main public document that analyses strategic objectives and describes military doctrine, published in January 2009 stresses the importance of the whole government approach and interagency cooperation. QDR reads that even though some progress has been made “continued improvement requires a sustained focus on developing whole-of-government strategies and plans, as well as addressing operational seams between military and civilian agencies.”¹⁴⁶

If the military continues to be the lead in nation building efforts it could be perceived abroad as the main diplomatic instrument of the American foreign policy. This clearly puts American foreign policy goals at risk. It sends a wrong message to the host country that the military is the solution to all problems and more effective than civilian government. The United States has to be able to develop a nation building model that will utilize all of her resources while transforming the military into a force capable to meet all of the challenges of the rapidly changing 21st century security environment. It is clear that continuing to rely on the military in all aspects of nation building efforts simply because there is no other viable option, will not achieve desired results and will endanger wider foreign policy goals. Therefore, the whole government approach is a start in building a

¹⁴⁵ Magnuson, National Defense, 94.673

¹⁴⁶ U.S. Department of Defense, Quadrennial Roles and Missions Review Report (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Defense, January 2009), 5.

sustainable nation building strategy. Even though some progress has been made there is much more work to be done.

Chapter 3

Building a Sustainable Afghan Government: Centralized vs. Decentralized State Model

Afghanistan is the longest nation building mission conducted by the United States and whether the end result is a sustainable Afghan state will undoubtedly define the prospect for any future nation building missions. The lessons from building a sustainable government in Afghanistan, which is the ultimate goal of nation building efforts, will be of paramount importance should the United States decide to consolidate lessons from past missions and develop a nation building apparatus.

After the fall of the Taliban in 2001, the Afghan people made a decision to form a unitary state and pursue a centralized government model. This decision, supported by the United States and the rest of the international community, resulted in a constitution that gives all executive, legislative, and judicial authority to the national government in Kabul. The current constitution created a highly centralized government; the president appoints provincial governors and most mid-level sub-provincial officials. Even though the constitution provides for a democratic election of provincial, district, municipal, and village councils, the elections have been held for only a few provincial councils. The central government in Kabul holds all policy and budgetary authority. Despite a long

history of central governments not being able to provide security to the remote rural areas, all security forces are national forces.¹⁴⁷

This chapter examines which government model, centralized or decentralized, is most likely to result in a sustainable Afghan state. The discussion focuses on two areas that are most consequential for the sustainability of the new Afghan state in the context of the complex history of Afghanistan. The first area is the inability of the central government to extend its reach and establish authority in rural areas. Therefore, this chapter examines tribalism in Afghanistan in order to identify solutions to the historically dysfunctional relationship between the central government and the periphery. In an effort to identify lessons that can be applied to today's interactions with the tribes, the chapter presents challenges that Great Britain and the Soviet Union faced in bringing the Pashtun tribes under the central rule. The second area is the fragile security situation. The Arbakai network serves as an excellent case study when examining whether local structures can contribute to maintaining security gains achieved during the U.S. military presence. The discussion then turns to the current developments in the area of governance and whether the current highly centralized model is functioning in Afghanistan. The main finding is that a plausible solution for Afghanistan seems to be a flexible centralized model that will allow division of responsibilities between the center and the periphery. A functional local government system that is built ground-up and engaged with Kabul is the key for the survival of the state.

¹⁴⁷ Biddle, Stephen., Christia, Fotini., and Thier, J Alexander. "Defining Success in Afghanistan." Foreign Affairs. 1 July 2010. Web. 19 Mar. 2014. <<http://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/66450/stephen-biddle-fotini-christia-and-j-alexander-thier/defining-success-in-afghanistan>>.

Tribalism in Afghanistan

Afghanistan is home to several religious sects and many ethnic, linguistic, and tribal groups. Pashtuns are the largest ethnic group. Tajiks make up the second largest group followed by Hazaras, Uzbeks, Turkmen, and Qizilbash. Additionally, there are over 100 other tribes and ethnic groups.¹⁴⁸ Pashtuns in Afghanistan belong to nearly 30 distinct tribes. Each tribe is divided into clans and lineages. About half of the Pashtun tribes belong to either the Durrani or the Ghilzai alliance, which are the two most influential Pashtun alliances in Afghanistan. The Durrani are predominant in the southwest Afghanistan, between Farah and Kandahar, while the Ghilzai are predominant in the southeast, between Kandahar and Kabul. It is also important to note that approximately ten million Pashtuns live in neighboring Pakistan where they represent the majority in the North-West Frontier Province and the northern part of the Baluchistan Province. Pashtuns speak Indo-Iranian and follow a social code called Pashtunwali, which translates into “the way of the Pashtun.” Afghanistan President Hamid Karzai is a former Popalzai Pashtun tribal leader.¹⁴⁹

Tajiks and Hazaras are the two largest ethnic groups following the Pashtuns. Tajiks account for about 25 percent of the population and they are concentrated in Kabul and in the Heart Province. Tajiks mostly live in urban areas and they are literate in Dari, a dialect of the Persian language that is the official government language in Afghanistan.

¹⁴⁸ Blood, Peter R. ed. “Afghanistan: A Country Study.” Washington: GPO for the Library of Congress, 2001.

¹⁴⁹ International Crisis Group. 2003. “Afghanistan: The Problem of Pashtun Alienation.” International Crisis Group Asia Report, No. 62.

As a result, Tajiks living in urban areas have traditionally served as partners in governance to the Pashtuns. Hazaras account for about 19 percent of the population. Historically, Hazaras have been politically and economically inferior to Pashtuns and Tajiks.¹⁵⁰

Relationships between the tribes are often contentious and hostile. In addition to power struggles within Afghanistan, many of the Afghan tribes have ethnic ties with other nations. Pashtuns in Afghanistan have ties with Pashtuns in Pakistan. Afghan Uzbeks have ties with Uzbekistan, Afghan Tajiks with Tajikistan, Afghan Farsiwans (or Persians) with Iran, and Afghan Turkmen with Turkmenistan. Ethnicity and tribalism have often been the reason for splits between the Afghans.¹⁵¹ Consequently, Afghans have not developed the sense of nationhood and unity. In Afghan society, family, not the Afghan nation, is the single most important institution.

It could be argued that tribal identity is merely one of many potential identities for the Afghans. Some argue that tribal identities and tribal boundaries offer only a limited insight into Afghanistan's social structures; it is more important to study local conflicts, elites, and institutions, all of which cross tribal boundaries.¹⁵² For instance, 28 percent of the recorded conflicts in 2008 occurred within the family, while only 18 percent were conflicts between communities.¹⁵³ Nevertheless, tribal identities are a reality in

¹⁵⁰ International Crisis Group, 2003.

¹⁵¹ Hardy, Frank W. "Is American Policy in Afghanistan Flawed?" Suite101.com, 26 July 2009 <http://us-foreign-affairs.suite101.com/article.cfm/is_american_policy_in_afghanistan_flawed>

¹⁵² ARRC. 2009. 'My Cousin's Enemy is My Friend: A Study of Pashtun "Tribes" in Afghanistan', Afghanistan Research Reachback Center White Paper. TRADOC G2 Human Terrain System. United States Army. Fort Leavenworth, KS.

¹⁵³ Dennys, Christian. and I. Zaman. "Trends in local Afghan conflicts." CPAU. 2009.

Afghanistan and an important consideration when examining the proper form of government for the country.

Centralized versus Decentralized Government

There is a sharp division between those who believe that a decentralized government is the only sustainable solution and those who caution that any tribal solution in Afghanistan is a dangerous path and could result in further destabilization. Tribalism in Afghanistan has existed for centuries and Afghan tribes have traditionally resisted central authority. Therefore, when discussing the proper model of government in Afghanistan it is vital to examine the historically dysfunctional relationship between the central government and the tribes living outside urban areas.

a) Centralized Government

Afghanistan has historically been a centralized state with political and administrative powers based in Kabul. Pashtun Ahmad Shah founded today's Afghanistan in 1747. Afghanistan was established as a centralized state that resembled a tribal military system. Amir 'Abd al-Rahman Khan, who reigned from 1880 to 1901, further consolidated the governance by setting up a centralized administrative system. He successfully used the support from the British Empire to marginalize the tribes and increase the power of the state. Khan's successors continued to promote and strengthen the central government. Thus, the first Afghan constitution was adopted in 1923. At the onset of the Cold War in the 1950s, Afghanistan experienced inflow of resources from abroad what was used by Zahir Shah to further centralize administration. Centralized government weakened and

fell apart after the 1973 coup by Daoud Khan and the 1978 communist coup. Subsequent civil war resulted in anarchy. Finally, the Taliban reestablished a centralized system that that was dismantled by the US-led Coalition forces in November 2001.¹⁵⁴

After the Taliban was ousted, discussions about centralized versus decentralized government emerged. Even though the international community advocated a federal system early in the process, Afghans stood against decentralization. For Afghans, a decentralized state was synonymous with oppression and disintegration of their country. Therefore, the Constitutional Loya Jirga, a form of a mass meeting usually organized to discuss major events, passed the 2004 Afghan constitution establishing that Afghanistan is a “centralized unitary state.”¹⁵⁵

A significant number of Afghan politicians and citizens initially supported strong central government. Afghan politicians and policymakers of various backgrounds believed that a strong central government would help control powerful local figures and reduce criminal influence. Research has shown that many Afghan citizens continue to favor a strong central government in hopes that it will weaken the power of war commanders who have been causing suffering for many years. Despite the obvious corruption within the central government, there is an understanding that a strong central state can neutralize local powerholders.¹⁵⁶

¹⁵⁴ Mullen, Rani D. ‘Centralization versus Decentralization: The Importance of Sequencing and Timing’, in *Building State and Security in Afghanistan*. Edited by W. Danspeckgruber. Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs. 2007.

¹⁵⁵ Mullen, 2007.

¹⁵⁶ Lister, Sarah. 2007. ‘Understanding State-Building and Local Government in Afghanistan’, Crisis States Research Centre, Working Paper No. 1

Some might argue that a tribal solution in Afghanistan can be a dangerous path and could result in further destabilization and bring into question the survival of the state. History shows that even though decentralization after an internal conflict can seem like a logical solution, it can further aggravate ethnic hostilities and increase separatist aspirations.¹⁵⁷ For instance, peace settlements following the disintegration of Yugoslavia in 1990s included establishment of various types of decentralized governing models. In the case of Bosnia, the central government established by the Dayton peace agreement is weak while the provincial governments that are based on ethno-national criteria exert strong power.¹⁵⁸ As a result, Bosnia is heavily decentralized and caught up in constant ethnic struggles that make any significant social or economic progress impossible.

In Bosnia, there is a lack of will by some ethnic groups to remain a part of the independent Bosnian state. The Serbian population in Bosnia has strong ties with neighboring Serbia and systematically undermines the central government in Sarajevo in the effort to further empower the Serbian ethnic government. There are definite similarities between Bosnia and Afghanistan in terms of diversity, fear of ethnic dominance, lack of national unity, and various ethnic ties with neighboring countries. Bosnia is a proof that when a country emerges out of conflict heavily divided, decentralized systems, particularly those that are built on ethnical or tribal criteria, can be ineffective and paralyzing.

¹⁵⁷ Mullen, 2007.

¹⁵⁸ Mullen, 2007.

b) Decentralized Government

It is plausible to argue that no centralized form of government can be successful in establishing firm and effective control in Afghanistan due to diversity of the Afghan people and the strength of tribal structures. Therefore, only a ground-up approach can ensure lasting security and prosperity for the Afghan people. It is important to note that history shows that no central government established in Afghanistan successfully reached the periphery and subdued the tribes. The current central government in Afghanistan has been inherently ineffective in providing services and security to the people living outside of the urban areas. For instance, while the justice system exists in urban areas, seventy five percent of the Afghans who live in rural areas depend on village elders, district governors, clerics, and police chiefs to settle disputes and provide order and security.¹⁵⁹

In Afghanistan, centralized governance has the appearance of one tribe gaining power over the other tribes. Democracy in Afghanistan cannot be achieved by giving power to a selected single tribe or a group of tribes because history suggests that it would lead to abuses of power.¹⁶⁰ Provincial power figures advocate decentralization because they see themselves as subjects of a Pashtun-dominated government in Kabul rather than equal citizens of Afghanistan.¹⁶¹ Many Afghans see the central government as a tool to rule the population and territories. There is deep distrust that the state is willing and able to protect the rights of all Afghans.

¹⁵⁹ Barfield, Thomas., Neamat, Nojumi and J. Alexander, Their. "The Clash of Two Goods: State and non-State Dispute Resolution in Afghanistan", USIP. 2006.

¹⁶⁰ Shahrani, Nazif. "Afghanistan Can Learn From Its Past." The New York Times, 14 October 2001 <<http://www.nytimes.com/2001/10/14/opinion/14SHAH.html>>

¹⁶¹ Rubin, Barnett R. and Helena Malikyar. 2003. 'The Politics of Center-Periphery Relations in Afghanistan', Center on International Cooperation.

It can also be argued that decentralized government is not only a viable option but also the only solution that has worked in the past. Musahiban dynasty that ruled Afghanistan from 1929 to 1978 managed to maintain stability because the Musahibans recognized the importance of local authority. On the other hand, Amanullah Khan, who ruled Afghanistan from 1919 to 1929, failed to create a strong state. His attempt to push the central government into rural areas resulted in local uprisings followed by Amanullah's abdication and several months of anarchy. Even today, Afghans in rural areas reject interfering of a strong central government into their local matters. Afghans living in southern and eastern Afghanistan consider the central government a foreign body.¹⁶²

Case Study: Pashtun Tribes

Pashtun tribes represent an appropriate case study when examining limitations to the influence of the central government in Kabul. Pashtun tribes are the largest ethnic group in Afghanistan and they have persistently rejected central authority throughout the Afghanistan history. The social structure of the Pashtun tribes and their full commitment to Pashtunwali make it almost impossible for any central government to assert its authority and rule these tribes. The tribes have historically rejected the idea that any other form of law except Pashtunwali should be enforced. The history of Afghanistan offers two instances that illustrate how Pashtuns respond to strong central rule. Great Britain and the Soviet Union both tried and failed to subdue the Pashtun tribes. Even though

¹⁶² Jones, Seth G. "Going Local: The Key to Afghanistan." The Wall Street Journal, 7 August 2009 <http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052970204908604574336402390524212.html>

Great Britain and the Soviet Union were occupying forces, these case studies are useful because Pashtuns view any external parties, including Afghan actors, as unwelcome interference.

a) British Policies

In order to protect the markets in British India from the Russians and preempt a likely Russian invasion, the British extended their influence into the Indian subcontinent's North-West Frontier, an area inhabited by the Pashtun tribes. From 1849 to 1947, the British implemented a number of policies to bring the Pashtuns under the control of the British authority.¹⁶³ Two policies implemented by the British, Indirect Rule and the Maliki System, are relevant for this discussion because they illustrate that Pashtun reject any external influence and value freedom and independence above any immediate gain.

As British policies shifted from suppression to accommodation, they implemented Indirect Rule and the Maliki System. Under Indirect Rule policy the tribes were allowed to manage their own affairs and British administrators were to settle disputes through tribal custom laws. The Maliki System was established through agreements with tribal elders or Maliks to acknowledge British authority. The purpose of the Maliki System was to legitimize British authority by delegating administrative duties to tribal Maliks. The British would generally award good behavior by giving compensation to the Maliks or they would request amends for deviant behavior.¹⁶⁴ These actions suggest the British believed that certain Pashtun tribal leaders had influence over the jirgah, an assembly of

¹⁶³ Groh, Ty L. "Ungoverned Spaces: the Challenges of Governing Tribal Societies." Naval Postgraduate School Thesis. Monterey, California. June 2006.

¹⁶⁴ Groh, 2006.

tribal elders called for various purposes from waging war or composing peace to resolving disputes. However, even though some Pashtun men did have a significant influence, they did not have enough power to direct the actions of the entire tribe.

Pashtuns viewed Indirect Rule as the first step in conceding permanent authority to the British. Even in situations where the British system could have had economic benefits, the tribes resisted. Pashtuns have a deep mistrust of outsiders and value their independence more than any economic benefits. Therefore, the Pashtun tribes accepted British authority when it was not a threat to their independence and resisted when they felt that their freedom was endangered. As a result, even though these policies resulted in establishment of some degree of order and security on the North-West Frontier, they failed to establish a strong British authority.¹⁶⁵

b) Soviet Policies

From 1979 to 1989, the Soviet Union invested a significant amount of resources to conquer Afghanistan and transform it into another communist state. Afghans, with the support of the United States and Saudi Arabia, forced the Soviets to leave in defeat.¹⁶⁶ The Soviet policies in Afghanistan were mostly oppressive and failed to establish any consequential authority. After realizing that policies designed to suppress the Afghans were not effective, the Soviets tried more accommodating policies.¹⁶⁷

¹⁶⁵ Groh, 2006.

¹⁶⁶ Tanner, Stephen. "Afghanistan: A Military History from Alexander the Great to the Fall of the Taliban." Cambridge, MA: Da Capo Press. 2002.

¹⁶⁷ Groh, 2006.

Similar to the British, the Soviets were unsuccessful in negotiating agreements with tribal elders. In most cases, the Pashtuns violated agreements with the Soviets as soon as it no longer served the tribe's interest. Furthermore, the tribes viewed the agreements only as an opportunity to take weapons or money from the Soviets and felt no duty to comply once they achieved their goal. The Soviets tried to win over the tribes by attempting to "Sovietize" the rural farmers. The Soviets tried to take the land from the wealthy and give it to the poor. However, the farmers refused to take land from the Khans because it violated their social structure. The Soviets responded by threatening and eventually forcing many poor Pashtun farmers to accept the land.¹⁶⁸

The majority of the Afghan people saw the Soviets as aggressors. Initially, Soviet policies were brutal and oppressive and they violated the Pashtun sense of justice. Soviets eventually adopted more accommodating policies, such as Sovietization and creating a Soviet-Afghan army. However, the damage had been done in the initial phase of the occupation and the Soviets failed to gain any lasting authority over the Afghans.¹⁶⁹

Experience of the British and the Soviets offers important lessons when engaging the Pashtuns and these lessons can be applied to other tribes in Afghanistan as well. Both British and Soviets recognized that they needed to engage the Pashtuns through tribal leaders in order to establish security and governance. However, both failed to fully understand the Pashtun social structure. British and Soviets attempted to isolate one or several leaders who would be able to influence the decisions of the tribe. Pashtun tribes,

¹⁶⁸ Groh, 2006.

¹⁶⁹ Groh, 2006.

as well as other tribes in Afghanistan, do not have a hierarchical structure and there is no one person with whom to negotiate. The social structure of the tribes in Afghanistan easily changes under external pressure.¹⁷⁰

It is clear that the commitment to Pashtunwali and preservation of freedom and independence are paramount for the Pashtuns. It is not likely that this will change and that Pashtuns, or any other tribe with a strong social structure, will allow the current Kabul government to rule them. Therefore, it is vital to engage the tribes in a way that corresponds to their social organization. In order to establish security and gain cooperation of the tribes, the government in Kabul, as well as the international community, should engage the tribes based on their customary social organization.

Security Solution on the Local Level: Arbakai Networks

Security has been the main concern of the Afghan people since 2001. Despite a long history of various forms of central government in Kabul not being able to provide security to the remote rural areas, the only force that is expected to maintain security gains achieved over the past decade is the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF), a national security force that includes armed forces and police. Recent Afghanistan report published by the U.S. Department of Defense warns that, despite ANSF making significant achievements in recent years, the security gains could be lost after the United States troops leave the country. While the Afghanistan National Army (ANA) is for the most part staffed, operational, and slowly gaining confidence of the Afghan people, the

¹⁷⁰ ARRC, 2009.

police forces remain understaffed, untrained, and ineffective.¹⁷¹ The Afghanistan National Police (ANP) has failed to develop necessary capabilities to assume responsibility at the end of 2014.¹⁷² News agencies on the ground report that a significant number of ANP members, up to thirty percent, are drug addicts. Additionally, ANP is frequently infiltrated by secret Taliban agents.¹⁷³ Additionally, the Afghan Border Police (ABP) is also ineffective and far from being self-sufficient.¹⁷⁴

Decentralization could provide an alternative on the local level to the dysfunctional ANP and ABP forces. The government in Kabul could utilize Arbakai networks as peacekeepers and border patrols. Arbakai networks have a potential to improve security by encouraging the people living in rural areas to take charge of their own security. Arbakai is a traditional system of village armed forces that defend communities and enforce decisions of tribal councils called the Jirgas. Arbakai networks have a long tradition in Loya Paktia province due to the mountainous terrain of the southeastern region that makes it difficult for central governments to assert their influence. Additionally, warlords do not dominate the southeastern region whereas tribal leaders still maintain a strong influence.¹⁷⁵

¹⁷¹ Department of Defense. "Report on Progress Toward Security and Stability in Afghanistan." November 2013

¹⁷² Department of Defense. 2013.

¹⁷³ Boone, John., Beaumont, Peter. "Meet Afghanistan's model police force: inexperience, drugs and double agents." [theguardian.com](http://www.theguardian.com). 4 November 2009
<<http://www.theguardian.com/world/2009/nov/04/afghanistan-police-nato-training-taliban>>

¹⁷⁴ Department of Defense. 2013

¹⁷⁵ Tariq, Mohammed Osman. "Tribal Security System (Arbakai) in Southeast Afghanistan." Occasional Paper no.7, Crisis States Research Centre. 2008.

The idea of the Arbakai assisting the central state is not a novel idea. The Arbakai have been known to send their people to support the central government. For instance, during the time of the Kingdom of Abdul Rahman, from 1873 to 1897, the tribes were asked to help central government by sending their people to fight. Furthermore, there is a system in place called Hasht Nafari' or Ashna Pari that facilitates this transfer of the Arbakai forces to assist the central government.¹⁷⁶

The word "arbakai" translated from Pashto means "messenger." The Arbakai are very different from militias. In southeast Afghanistan being an Arbakai member is considered an honor while belonging to a militia is considered shameful. The Arbakai are not for hire and they are unpaid. Typical responsibilities of the Arbakai are to (1) implement the Jirga's decisions, (2) maintain law and order, and (3) protect and defend borders of a tribe or a community. Border security has been historically a core task of the Arbakai and they have been very effective in this role. For instance, people from the southeast region Loya Paktia were not obliged to undertake two years of military service as a reward for their effectiveness as border keepers.¹⁷⁷

Arbakai system exemplifies how certain tribal structures can provide accountability and transparency, characteristics that the central government in Kabul is currently lacking. There is a clear division of responsibilities between the Jirga as the decision making authority and the Arbakai as the enforcement mechanism. The Jirga has the power to make decisions and authorize the Arbakai. On the other hand, the Arbakai have the power

¹⁷⁶ Ibid

¹⁷⁷ Ibid

to implement, but not to change Jirga decisions. This distinction of responsibilities makes it easy for the Jirga and the people to monitor the Arbakai. The Arbakai are accountable to the Jirga and the Jirga has the authority to manage and suspend the Arbakai. Transparency is guaranteed because the Jirga is a collective decision making body.¹⁷⁸

Some analysts state that Arbakai networks are unreliable and arming them will lead to further destabilization and creation of new warlords. In June 2006, Afghanistan's President Hamid Karzai authorized the Arbakai in eastern Afghanistan to help in local policing. Karzai argued that the Arbakai provide security and are loyal to the central government. He stated that arming the Arbakai was not inconsistent with the disarmament programs.¹⁷⁹ However, Pakistani journalist Ahmed Rashid stated at the time that Karzai's move was a setback in the efforts to strengthen the central government and predicted that arming Pashtun "militias" in the south would renew tribal rivalries. General Nur-al Haq Olumi, a member of parliament from Kandahar Province, stated that arming the Arbakai in the south while supporting national efforts to disperse and disarm militias was contradictory and potentially destructive. He claimed that this would result in the emergence of new warlords.¹⁸⁰

The more recent Afghan history shows that Arbakai networks can be successfully introduced in places where they currently do not exist. The Governor of Kunar Province established an Arbakai network in 2004 and based it on the long-standing Arbakai system of the Shinwari, Mohmand, and Khogyani tribes. In the 1960s and 1970s, the central

¹⁷⁸ Ibid

¹⁷⁹ Bruno, 2008.

¹⁸⁰ Bruno, 2008.

government engaged these tribes to provide border protection and prevent potential interference from Pakistan. To cover the expenses incurred by the tribes for providing border protection, the central government turned over a portion of state-owned irrigated lands to the Jirgas. Using the same model, the Arbakai system in Kunar Province was financed by the central government through the Jirga and not through direct payment to the Arbakai. This distinction is very important as it preserved the accountability and transparency mechanisms. Additionally, giving compensation to the Arbakai directly would in effect transform them into militia and create opportunities for corruption. The Arbakai in Kunar province had success in maintaining the security of development projects and on the main roads.¹⁸¹

It is important to note that in the case of Agab district of Kapisa province, located north of Kabul, the implementation of Arbakai system was unsuccessful. However, the failure is the result of poor design and implementation rather than a reflection of the true value of the Arbakai. The individuals who were entrusted with the implementation and management of the system were former combatants related to jihadist parties rather than legitimate representatives of the local population. They were included in the project because of their political affiliations. These individuals were responsible for selecting people who would be armed and assist the government in providing security. However, the Arbakai themselves were often attacked by the insurgents, which, understandably, did not provoke a reaction from the local population. The principal reason for the failure of this particular Arbakai system is the fact that it was implemented through a top-down approach. It was created to achieve political and financial goals of certain individuals.

¹⁸¹ Tariq. 2008

Arbakai system can function only if it is built through a bottom-up approach and embedded in the local structures that the people know and trust.¹⁸²

Is Current Centralized Model Working for Afghanistan?

Even with the strong support from the United States over the years, the current government in Kabul, often labeled the “Karzai’s government” to illustrate the fact that all government officials are handpicked by President Hamid Karzai, remains ineffective and unable to reach out to all of its citizens. The central government in Kabul is perceived as weak, corrupt, and unable to meet the needs of the Afghan people. The lack of cooperation between national and subnational levels of the government, which can be viewed as a direct result of virtually all power being centered in Kabul, hinders access of the Afghan people to public services. Government services have yet to reach the Afghans in rural areas. The subnational government representatives, members of local and provincial councils, even though they are to be elected at the subnational level and serve among their constituents, do not have clearly defined roles and powers. Provincial and district governors are directly appointed by Kabul and contribute to the ineffectiveness of the local government structures.¹⁸³

The government in Kabul appears to have recognized the importance of delegating some of its authority to local structures and has shown signs that it is moving away from a strictly centralized model. In March 2010, President Karzai approved a new governance

¹⁸² Ibid

¹⁸³ Department of Defense. “Report on Progress Toward Security and Stability in Afghanistan.” November 2013

policy that transfers some administrative and budgetary powers to subnational bodies, namely institutions at provincial, district, and municipal levels.¹⁸⁴

However, without a continued support from the outside for whichever government model the Afghans choose in the end, the sustainability of the Afghan state will be brought into question. Afghanistan is presently going through a stage often described as a transitional stage of the nation building process. This is the stage when a state emerging from conflict is sovereign but still too weak and riddled with corruption to be self-sustainable.¹⁸⁵

Afghanistan will need the support and resources from Washington for decades to come. Therefore, it is important to discuss whether the United States policy towards Afghanistan and the actions of the Afghan government have been moving in the same direction.

In the early stages of nation building in Afghanistan, policy makers in Washington dismissed a ground-up strategy. On the other hand, American allies like the British and Dutch have been pushing to engage tribal elements from some time. British Prime Minister Gordon Brown suggested in December 2007 that international forces should increase their support for Arbakai networks in southeast Afghanistan. The idea was given little credibility by American counterparts at the time. American General Dan McNeill, commander of the NATO forces at the time, called it potentially disastrous.¹⁸⁶ The Dutch

¹⁸⁴ Biddle, 2010.

¹⁸⁵ Menkhaus, Ken. "Quasi-States, Nation-Building, and Terrorist Safe Havens." *Journal of Conflict Studies*, [S.l.], v. 23, n. 2, Feb. 2006. ISSN 1715-5673.
<<http://journals.hil.unb.ca/index.php/JCS/article/view/216/444>>

¹⁸⁶ Bruno, 2008 .

also favor building relationships with tribal leaders. Instead of combating the Taliban, Dutch forces in Uruzgan focused on identifying reconstruction priorities in cooperation with the local leadership. The Dutch consider this approach to be the key to a long-term conciliation.¹⁸⁷

The turning point for the U.S. policy makers was the rise in violence in 2006. The events in 2006 made it clear that Kabul was not making progress in establishing control of the rural areas. There was a noticeable reversal in the official U.S. policy in 2008 when high-level officials started publicly discussing engaging tribal elements. Defense Secretary Robert M. Gates said in October 2008 that he favored some form of reconciliation in Afghanistan. Shortly after that statement and during a speech at the U.S. Institute for Peace in Washington, Gates was explicit in his support of engaging tribal elements. Defense Secretary Gates stated that, "At the end of the day the only solution in Afghanistan is to work with the tribes and provincial leaders in terms of trying to create a backlash ... against the Taliban."¹⁸⁸ In November 2008, General David McKiernan, top commander of NATO and US forces in Afghanistan at the time, recommended giving more power to local councils to stem violence in the country. McKiernan added that such approach would have multiple benefits. It would allow the Afghan government in Kabul to empower these committees so they can provide local security and oversight. At the

¹⁸⁷ Katzman, Kenneth. "Afghanistan: Post-War Governance, Security, and U.S. Policy" Congressional Research Service Report, 29 September 2008 < <http://fpc.state.gov/documents/organization/110749.pdf>>

¹⁸⁸ Bruno, 2008.

same time, it would allow the central government to benefit from the insight of community leaders.¹⁸⁹

On December 1, 2009, President Obama, in a speech held at West Point, revealed his much anticipated Afghanistan strategy for the first time after taking office. President Obama's remarks made it clear that the United States government gave up on building a highly central government in Afghanistan. President Obama opened the possibility of working with local leaders where they can be more effective partners.¹⁹⁰ He stated that, "We'll support Afghan ministries, governors, and local leaders that combat corruption and deliver for the people."¹⁹¹ The commitment of the Obama Administration to work with local authorities when viable is a continuation of the effort to build up local governance started at the end of the Bush administration. In 2008, before leaving the office, President Bush attempted to revive tribal structures, such as the traditional local advisory councils known as "jirgas" and "shuras," which play an important role in providing justice outside of urban centers.¹⁹² The U.S. State Department's Afghanistan and Pakistan Regional Stabilization Strategy published in January 2010 reflects the continuation of the efforts to build up local structures. It states that, "Improving the Afghan people's confidence in their government requires improved service delivery,

¹⁸⁹ Siddique, Abubakar. "Enlisting Tribes Against Militants In Afghanistan Carries Risks." Radio Free Europe Radio Liberty, 23 November 2008 <http://www.rferl.org/content/Enlisting_Tribes_Against_Militants_In_Afghanistan_Carries_Risks/1352111.html>

¹⁹⁰ Haddick, Robert. "This Week at War: What Will Obama's Afghanistan Look Like?" Foreign Policy, 4 December 2009 <http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2009/12/04/this_week_at_war_what_will_obamas_afghanistan_look_like?page=0.0>

¹⁹¹ The White House Office of Press Secretary. "Remarks by the President in Address to the Nation on the Way Forward in Afghanistan and Pakistan." December 01, 2009.

¹⁹² Katzman, Kenneth. "Afghanistan: Post-Taliban Governance, Security, and U.S. Policy." Congressional Research Service. July 20, 2009. pp 16-17<<http://fpc.state.gov/documents/organization/126512.pdf>>

greater accountability, and more protection from predatory government practices, particularly at the district and community level, where the Taliban is providing its own brand of brutal but efficient governance.”¹⁹³

Continued efforts to strengthen the subnational government by relying on the existing local structures have resulted in improved governance in rural areas. For instance, the Community Development Councils (CDCs), subnational government structures presently elected by the members in rural communities, have proven successful in the area of economic development. CDCs have been successful in securing international financing for small-scale development projects as well as providing other government services, such as conflict resolution. In areas where CDCs lack capacity, they are willing to engage traditional forms of government such as shura. Surveys indicate that Afghans in rural areas have a more favorable opinion about shura as sources of justice than they do of state courts.¹⁹⁴

Conclusion

The issue of centralization versus decentralization is not a simple issue in Afghanistan. Tribalism and local governance in Afghanistan are a reality and history shows that no central authority has managed to subdue tribal loyalties. Current central government in Kabul has a short reach, lacks credibility, and is unlikely to provide security to the

¹⁹³ U.S. Department of State, Office of the Special Representative for Afghanistan and Pakistan. “Afghanistan and Pakistan Regional Stabilization Strategy.” February 24, 2010.

¹⁹⁴ Shurkin, Michael. “Subnational Government in Afghanistan.” RAND National Defense Research Institute. 2001

Afghan people after the U.S. troops leave the country. It appears that some parts of the Afghan government, including President Karzai, do not see a strictly centralized government as a sustainable solution. The international community, headed by the United States, has moved away from building a strongly centralized government and towards empowering subnational government structures.

It is clear that the central government has to allow for delegation of certain powers to provinces and districts. That will increase the credibility of the central government and reduce abuse and corruption. Tribal leaders and other local actors can be invaluable partners and they are the key to establishing much needed security and order. Local leaders in Afghanistan understand their community needs and should be supported by the central government as well as the international community. However, the success of cooperation with the tribes will depend, as illustrated in the case study of the Pashtun tribes, on the government's willingness to engage the tribes in a way that will respect their existing social structure and their commitment to some degree of independence.

While there are areas like military and taxation that should stay under the central government, security and border control is one area where local structures can benefit the central government. The Arbakai could be used as peacekeepers and border patrols. The concept could be introduced in the parts of the country where Arbakai networks currently do not exist. When implementing the Arbakai system it is important to preserve the accountability and transparency mechanisms that make the system successful. The

Arbakai can be successful only if they have full support of both the Afghan government and the international community.

In rural areas where tribal structures are strong and central governments have been traditionally viewed as oppressors, Kabul should attempt to increase its reach and credibility by continuing efforts to engage traditional tribal structures. For instance, informal justice systems, such as “shura” structures, which have existed in Afghanistan for centuries and are currently the main and most effective forums for settling disputes, should continue to be incorporated into the formal justice system wherever possible. However, there is no doubt that these informal systems have to undergo certain changes to ensure equality and fairness.

As the much-anticipated 2014 elections are approaching and the United States is set to withdraw most of its forces by the end of the year, Afghanistan is facing a future with no guarantees for the long-term sustainability of its fragile government. However, building a sustainable and self-reliant Afghan state is not an impossible task. Research shows that many Afghans today want to participate in their government as citizens of Afghanistan but they have different notions as to what that actually means.¹⁹⁵ They deserve a government that is effective and accountable. It is very likely that Afghanistan will eventually move towards a more decentralized model and determining the proper level of decentralization will be a complex task. In the interim, the United States and the rest of the international community should continue assisting the Afghans in constructing a

¹⁹⁵ Rubin., Malikyar. 2003.

government that is centralized enough to unite the country and decentralized enough to enable participation of all of its citizens.

Conclusion

Despite its extensive nation building experience prior to 9/11 the United States appeared unprepared for the missions in Afghanistan and Iraq. The beginning of the nation building efforts in Afghanistan and Iraq can be described as amateurish and badly conceived. This should come as no surprise considering that the U.S. anti-terrorism strategy in the immediate aftermath of 9/11 was designed to achieve regime changes by the use of military force while at the same time avoiding protracted nation building engagements. However, shortly after declaring a military victory in Afghanistan and Iraq it became clear that without rebuilding the Afghan and Iraqi societies it would be impossible to secure a lasting victory against terrorists.

The arguments that support the claim that terrorism is not a concern in the majority of failed states presented in this thesis are valid and convincing. However, the examples of Afghanistan and Somalia presented in Chapter 1 illustrate that failed states offer important opportunities for terrorist networks. In the case of Afghanistan prior to the U.S. invasion, the absence of a functioning government enabled al Qaeda to establish a stronghold and plan attacks on the U.S. homeland. Present Somalia is an example of how corrupt government structures in a failing state can be used by terrorists to freely move their people and materials. Therefore, it is plausible to argue that there will likely be instances in the next few decades when failing and weak states will jeopardize global stability and serve as terrorist safe havens.

In the absence of an interagency nation building structure, the U.S. military was asked to take the lead in the post 9/11 missions in Afghanistan and Iraq. The military had a difficult task – leading democratization efforts and economic recovery while at the same time performing its principal task of maintaining security. The Iraq case study offered in Chapter 2 illustrates that the tasks the military was asked to lead—building government structures, reconciling warring factions, and addressing high unemployment—are clearly beyond traditional military training. Securing lasting success in the area of democratization and economy is an overwhelming task even for the world’s greatest military. It is clear that if the military continues to be the lead in nation building efforts, not because it is the best tool but the only available tool, it could be perceived abroad as the main diplomatic instrument of the American foreign policy. This would clearly put American foreign policy goals at risk. It would say to the world that the United States considers the military to be more effective than civilian government. Asking the military to develop capabilities necessary to lead democratization and economic projects has a potential of diminishing its ability to defend homeland and win conventional wars.

The mission in Afghanistan exemplifies the difficulties of nation building as an anti-terrorism strategy. Nation building in Afghanistan has lasted for over a decade and resulted in a high number of casualties, both American and Afghan, and an enormous cost. As the U.S. military is set to withdraw by the end of 2014, it is not clear if the new and fragile Afghan state will be able to stop resurgence of the Taliban. This thesis maintains that transforming a post-conflict society into a sustainable democracy is not an impossible task in Afghanistan or elsewhere.

However, only a strategy that takes into account the history of the host country and identifies common interests of the warring factions can result in a success. It is also important to note that there is no “one size fits all” solution in terms of governance in post-conflict countries. As discussed in Chapter 3, the decentralized model in Bosnia envisioned by the Dayton Agreement continued nationalistic divide and made any real progress difficult. On the other hand, a centralized state model may not be sustainable in Afghanistan. Tribalism and local governance in Afghanistan are a reality. The current central government in Kabul has a short reach, lacks credibility, and is unlikely to provide security to the Afghan people after the U.S. troops leave the country.

The United States has to be able to build a state-centric approach to nation building. In the case of Afghanistan, this thesis upholds that the best constitutional framework is a unitary state that is structured in a way that will enable participation of traditional local structures. The central government needs to concede some of its power to provinces and districts. It is very likely that Afghanistan will eventually move towards a more decentralized model. Continued long-term support by the United States and the rest of the international community will be critical in ensuring sustainability of whichever government model the Afghans choose.

It is easy to understand why nation building is no policy maker’s preferred strategy – it is costly, requires a long commitment even after the military troops leave the host country, and comes with no guarantees for success. Precisely for these reasons, the United States policy makers have resisted giving nation building a permanent place in the wider foreign

policy and national security strategy. As a result, there has been no serious effort to consolidate knowledge from past missions and develop a nation building apparatus that could be deployed in future missions.

We are likely to face additional state failures in the next several decades that will pose a global security threat. The United States, as the only remaining world power, will be called to take the lead. Past experience shows that any intervention in a failed state, in order to have a lasting success, will have to include some level of nation building. However, that reality is not easily accepted among the policy makers in Washington. Those who propose reexamining and fixing the nation building system are in the minority.

This thesis recognizes some ongoing efforts to design a proper approach to nation building. One effort that is worth mentioning is building a “whole government” approach. This effort is predicated on a strong relationship between the military and civilian agencies in both planning and execution. However, it is clear that even though some progress has been made in building an effective interagency structure, such as the establishment of the Civilian Response Corps, there is a lot more work to be done.

After Iraq and Afghanistan, the United States is faced with a choice – whether to consolidate lessons from past missions and build an effective nation building apparatus or do nothing and face another crisis unprepared. The United States will first have to accept that some degree of nation building is a necessity when dealing with failed and post-

conflict states. The next step is developing a nation building model that will effectively utilize all available resources. The United States cannot continue to rely on its military in all aspects of nation building simply because there is no other viable option. The time to start learning from past missions and initiate a reform that will result in an effective nation building apparatus is now.

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Curriculum Vitae

Nermina Bihorac Burket was born on November 27, 1975 in Zenica, Bosnia and Herzegovina. She is the daughter of Nihad and Fatima and has one brother, Amir, and one sister, Edina. She immigrated to the United States in 1998 and currently resides with her husband Edward in Silver Spring, MD.

After graduating high school and prior to moving to the United States, Mrs. Burket worked for the United Nations and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe as a language assistant and trainer of the international election observers in Bosnia. Mrs. Burket graduated from the University of Maryland University College with a Bachelor's Degree in Business Communication in 2006 while working as a Fraud Analyst at the Airlines Reporting Corporation in Arlington, VA. She is currently working as a Regulatory Analyst at the Financial Industry Regulatory Authority in Rockville, MD. Mrs. Burket also works as a freelance interpreter for Bosnian.

Upon graduation, Mrs. Burket plans to further pursue her career at the Financial Industry Regulatory Authority.